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MATILDA OF TUSCANY

NORA DUFF

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PORTRAIT OF MATILDA
(FROM A FRESCO AT VERONA)

MATILDA OF TUSCANY

'Chronicles tell of deeds:
Time alone reveals the individual.'

'Cosi 'l crin ti corono, e bramo intanto
Tromba, da cui rimbombi in Vaticano
Encomio eterno di tua larga mano.
Non più lodi Elicona
Con favoloso canto
L'Ariannea corona;
Ma di questa ch'io t'offro innalzi il vanto.
Ben merta, che si stime,
Che di bellezza è in grando più sublime
Quanto nel ciel più belle
Delle dipinte son le vere stelle.'

From the *Ode in lode della Contessa Matilda*
Cardinal Barberini (Urban VIII.).

M433

MATILDA OF TUSCANY

LA GRAN DONNA D'ITALIA

BY

NORA DUFF

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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N. D.

FLORENCE
May 1909

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MATILDA OF TUSCANY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE beautiful young girl who appeared to Dante as guardian of the Earthly Paradise, who singing gathered flowers by Lethe's stream, has puzzled many a student of the great poet, and all sorts of conjectures have been made as to her identity. Yet to the earlier commentators and to those who have studied carefully the history of Italy before Dante's day this difficulty could not exist. For to Dante, a Tuscan of the Tuscans, there could have been only *one* Matilda—the great Countess of Tuscany,[1] whose name was still a household word in his days, and who remains for ever a grand immortal figure in the world's history. Most fittingly was she placed as guardian of the Earthly Paradise, she, who to a saintly life added noble deeds, she, who ruled her people wisely and well, and who in an age of lawlessness and barbarity stood for law and order in a most remarkable degree.

Although the barest shell of Canossa remains to tell

[1] Benvenuto da Imola, 'L'Anonimo,' a Florentine of the fourteenth century, Jacopo della Lana, 'L'Ottimo,' Francesco da Buti, Pietro Alighieri, 'Pseudo-Boccaccio,'—all these make no suggestion that she could be other than the great Countess.

of its former greatness, a visit to it to-day must serve to strengthen the conviction that Matilda of Tuscany and Matilda of the Earthly Paradise are one and the same person. Canossa uprears its rugged outlines on a height at the outskirts of the Reggian Apennines, a huge mass of rock superimposed upon a hill. Frequent landslips and ill-treatment at the hands of man have left but a remnant of the castle; even that remnant is of a building raised there some centuries after Matilda's time. As the traveller approaches from the Ciano d'Enza side, through a region bare and terrible, along the narrow track with gloomy depths beneath it, suggestive of the ' balze ' of the Inferno, he too has a vision of a sunlit hill. The massive rock with the ruins of fortified, encircling walls grows clearer before his eyes, and with each step forward, the similarity between this hill and the mount of Purgatory emphasises itself to his mind, the old walls seeming to mount upwards in circles, as do the terraces in Purgatory. And his imagination at once reverts to the lady who dwelt at the summit, even as Matilda in the Earthly Paradise. He feels that Dante may have travelled along this very track in visiting Canossa. What more likely, since the poet seems to know so well the Pietra Bismantova only some few miles away? More of Matilda's citadel doubtless remained in Dante's day, more traditions were current of her—traditions handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation, containing, nevertheless, the germs of truth, since spoken words were more carefully cherished in the old times, and memories more tenacious before the knowledge of a written language grew common. To this day there are old people in the mountains who will tell you legends of the ' Contessa Matilde '! but alas! she has

RUINS OF CANOSSA

become a very shadowy figure, or else has been metamorphosed into a witch!

In trying to realise something of that Italy of long ago, we perceive that in Dante's time a more intimate knowledge of her life existed—that Matilda was then more than a traditionary name. To the 'divine' poet, moreover, she was a living embodiment of some of his most cherished ideals; his love and admiration for her would have been quickened by the knowledge of the part she played in the history of the city he loved so well.

Never had Florence been so wisely ruled as in Matilda's days, never had the city been so well protected as when it rested under the shadow of her great name. Within the gates in her time factions did not exist, and law and order prevailed. The surrounding country districts, however, were overrun by the lesser nobility, whose castles, built on the hilltops, dominated the river plain.[1] These barons of Teutonic origin had in the old days been fiercely jealous of the great Boniface, Matilda's father; now in Matilda's time they declared themselves adherents of the Emperor, an assertion which lent them a pretext for swooping down on the citizens, plundering their merchandise when they issued forth to the north or to the south, and hemming them in so that no outlet for their commerce was possible. It was Matilda alone who was able to hold these marauders in check, and punish their deeds of violence; again and again the Florentines appealed to her for protection, and, so long as her forces were available, they never appealed in vain. So that

[1] Dal Pozzo inclines to think that the Tuscan Lombards were amongst Boniface's assailants at the battle of Coviolo. See Dal Pozzo, p. 185. He says further that they hated the idea of Boniface's increasing power, and were most anxious to work his downfall.

when through stress of war the power of the great Countess was weakened, and her fortunes at a low ebb, the citizens of Florence loyally repaid her. They withstood the Emperor in her name, they built a strong circle of walls around their city, and defended it with such spirit that the Emperor had finally to abandon the siege and continue his way to Rome, as we shall see hereafter.

To Florence Matilda granted various privileges, and instituted a system of government which answered so admirably that, even after her death, the city went on quietly governing itself under the same conditions, and was practically autonomous long before it declared itself a commune. All this may have come back to Dante in thinking of the great Countess, the one woman who in Italy had made her name synonymous with that of a worthy ruler.

If we wish to find another point of resemblance between Dante's Matilda and her prototype, may we not see it in the frank laughter and love that Matilda of the Earthly Paradise flung across the stream to the poet? For the real Matilda was, above all things, a friend and lover of mankind. In reading the history of her life we are struck by the number of notable characters who paid homage to this remarkable woman, and who evinced the warmest admiration and regard for her. From her earliest years she was brought into close association with the Popes, and fought, according to tradition, for Nicholas II. and Alexander II. before the walls of Rome. Later we meet with a long array of famous names—Gregory VII. and Urban II. amongst the Popes; Peter Damian, Anselm of Lucca, our own Anselm of Canterbury, Bernard of Parma, amongst the famous ecclesiastics; Arduino della Palude, who instructed her in the art of war, Domnizo, the priest

of Canossa, who wrote lovingly of her deeds,—all these testify to the worth of her friendship, besides many others not mentioned here.

Of Matilda the warrior we learn something from contemporary historians, much from Domnizo the faithful chronicler, who describes glowingly many a battle fought and won by his dear mistress. We realise from these records the heroic part she played—how for over thirty years she upheld the cause of the Church against the might of the Empire; how untiringly she fought; how again and again she raised armies to help the Church's need; how she gave everything, her wealth, her vassals, and her very self, in consenting to two loveless marriages, for what she believed to be right; and how but for her noble defence of the Church, Italy would have remained an appanage of the Empire and the Pope would have retained only the power he held as Bishop of Rome. In the brief spaces of peace that were vouchsafed to poor unhappy Italy, Matilda saw that the laws should be properly administered, she built and endowed churches, monasteries, and hospitals without number. She had roads and bridges constructed in order to open up hitherto inaccessible parts of her dominions, she founded the baths of Casciano and restored the baths of Pisa. To her public charities were added numerous acts of gracious kindliness. She succoured the needy and the hungry, and Canossa was often a very haven of refuge for the oppressed.

The Italian peninsula in the eleventh century presents no pleasing spectacle. In the south the long-drawn-out struggle between the last remnants of the Longobard race and the survivors of the Byzantine rule on the one hand, against the rival Saracen and Norman invaders on

the other, devastated the lands of Beneventum, Capua, Salerno, and the island of Sicily. In the north a latent national sentiment, a half-unconscious desire to be free of the German yoke, was continually stifled by the factions and petty jealousies of the nobles. Here a great marquis would gain pre-eminence by strategy and force, or an ecclesiastic would rise to power and unlawfully seize lay and Church lands alike; then conspiracies would be set on foot by the rest against the one successful man, and there would be no respite until he was overthrown. The Emperor would be appealed to, and would cross the Alps to subdue his rebellious vassals, and there would be more bloodshed, cities would be laid in ashes as examples to the rest; and the nobles, ecclesiastic and secular, would vie with one another in seeking imperial favour, only to quarrel the more violently or plot against the Emperor, once he had set his face northwards again.

Into such an atmosphere of conspiracies and wars was Matilda born. Her father, Boniface, one of the greatest lords of his day, had certainly devoted himself to amassing riches and acquiring territories, but with this saving grace, that he also encouraged the spread of learning and protected its source,—the monasteries, in a manner unequalled by his compeers; Beatrice of Lorraine, his wife, possessed rare gifts of graciousness and tact, was both gentle and strong. The daughter of these two inherited the best side of both her parents, the strength of purpose, valour and vigour of her father, and the softer graces of her mother. In spite of the stormy and troubled times Matilda's education was extraordinarily diversified. She could converse fluently in four different languages, and could correspond in Latin with the great men her contemporaries; she wrote her letters herself

without the aid of a clerk. She helped to foster and develop the love of learning; she herself was well versed in jurisprudence, and one of her greatest pleasures was in collecting manuscripts and mastering their contents.

When we think of these barbarous days and how little education the sons and daughters of the nobles received, we are still more astonished at Matilda's attainments. For in the great feudal castles the boys were taught merely the rough arts of war, and the girls in the nunneries acquired a few Latin prayers and the art of executing rude tapestries. Many of the early German emperors could only affix a cross to their diplomas. Matilda therefore seems some centuries in advance of her times, enjoying almost the knowledge and accomplishments of the great Renaissance ladies, retaining, however, the severer simplicity of her own days. And in a way—the way of perfect liberty of action, since there was no male relative left her, after the age of thirty, under whom she could remain in tutelage, as was the custom of those times—she is curiously akin to the women of our own century.

That the history of her life and the work she accomplished should have been so strangely neglected in this country is a matter of surprise. Historians of the Middle Ages, of the Popes, and of the struggle between the Papacy and Empire, have but mentioned her in passing, in connection with the Canossa incident, or they have laid stress on the fact that she possessed large tracts of territory, which after her death became the property of the Church. Yet of the part she played in the history of Italy, of her magnificent efforts to uphold the Church against the Empire, of her friendship with Gregory VII. and their unformulated ideal of a united Italy—the dream of many a ruler, statesman, and warrior, in after

years—modern historians are mostly silent. In Italy certainly, the work of Matilda's life is a recognised factor in history; from the early chroniclers down to the present day, writers have not been wanting to testify to her fame.

Of Matilda the warrior maid of Holy Church, the heroine of many a battlefield, the prototype of Tasso's 'Clorinda,' of Matilda the ruler and judge—the friend of great men and lowly—the gracious châtelaine of Canossa—we catch glimpses in all these varying accounts, but of Matilda the woman, of her personal joys and sorrows, we know so little. Most of the records have perished; two only of her letters have come down to us. The times in which she lived are so far removed from our own, the happenings of so many intervening centuries have blurred their outline for us, that it is as if a mist hid her from us, or a thick veil shrouded her face—a veil we are unable to draw aside.

Those who have been fortunate enough to gain access to the Vatican MS. of Domnizo's chronicle, or who have seen the excellent reproductions of the miniatures in Muratori's version published by Bethmann, or by Pertz, must be conscious at once of a keen sense of disappointment if they had hoped to glean from them an idea of Matilda's personal appearance. These miniatures are in no sense portraits of men and women; they are rude symbols meant to represent the people whose names are written beside them. Yet they were painted probably in Matilda's day—at latest a few years after her death. The later portraits—the fresco at Bianello, the one preserved in the Canossa Palace at Verona, the one in the Sacristy of Mantua Cathedral, represent a beautiful woman. Yet these were all painted a century or more after Matilda

had been laid to rest in her tomb at San Benedetto. It is even so with the written records. Contemporary history gives us rude outlines, but still nothing that can satisfy our desire for the fuller understanding of the woman we would know. Later history fills in the details, but we have to accept its statements with caution, lest here imagination may have been given too free a rein.

The following pages are the outcome of some few years' study of a most engrossing subject, and represent an effort to piece together the all too fragmentary knowledge of Matilda which has been handed down to us. If they serve to kindle a wider interest in a woman whose name once resounded throughout the length and breadth of Europe, if they help in any measure to give an idea of what Matilda's life and deeds have meant to Italy, they will not have been written in vain.

CHAPTER II

The foundation of the house of Canossa—Siegfried—Azzo or Atto—The story of Adelaide—Her reception at Canossa—Canossa's triumph—Azzo's successor Tedaldo—Boniface's rule—His greatness and his tyranny—Jealousy of Henry III.—Death of Boniface—His wife Beatrice—Hildegarde and Guilla, wives of Atto and Tedaldo.

THE most interesting document concerning Matilda, inasmuch as it was written while she was still alive, is the chronicle in rude Latin verse by Domnizo, a monk of Canossa. In many respects, however, it gives us only tantalising glimpses of Matilda, and is mainly occupied at first with recounting the greatness of Canossa. In fact, the grim old fortress is supposed to be telling its own story, and the first part is devoted to the history and doings of Matilda's ancestors. Siegfried is the first mentioned by Domnizo. A native of Tuscany and of Lucchese origin, he gained some fame in warring in the Marches of Lombardy. He left behind him three sons, two of whom settled in Parma, and became the progenitors of the families of Guiberti and Barata.

'Both of them were great and resplendent in honour,' says Domnizo. But it is to the third son, Azzo or Atto, that the glory of the house of Canozza belongs. 'Azzo was as astute as a serpent. In the same way that on the high Alps the pine tree overtops the oak, in like manner Azzo surpassed by great lengths his brothers,

growing in power, lifting himself on high, abounding in many things.'[1]

Azzo attached himself as mercenary to Alard, Bishop of Reggio, and received from him instead of pay the rock of Canossa on feudal tenure. This is how Domnizo makes Canossa tell Azzo's story.[2] 'The wise Lothaire, King of the Lombards, the suzerain of my master Azzo, had for wife Adelaide, the illustrious Queen. But all too soon died Lothaire, and contrary to the wishes of Adelaide, Berengar, a cruel man, was elected King. He, overcome with anger, made her prisoner, because she did not please to approve of his election as King, and as he had her in his power, he shut her up finally in the fortress of Garda with only a waiting-maid as companion, and a good priest named Martin. Here they lay for a long time, imprisoned in the dungeon of a tower; but finally the priest succeeded with an iron bar in secretly breaking through a part of the wall, and releasing the Queen and her damsel; they escaped safely in men's clothes, which he had procured for them.

'From there they came to the lake which keeps Mantua alive, and they adventured themselves in a boat kept by a good fisherman. The priest invited him to take him and his companions and row them across. And when the fisher asked what pay he would receive, the priest replied: "If you knew who we were, you would hasten with the greatest joy to ferry us, without asking for payment"—at which the fisher said: "Tell me then who you are, if you desire that I should take you over." And the priest answered him: "If you will swear to keep it secret, we will reveal to you the entire mystery, which should satisfy you wholly." They had

[1] Dom., lib. I. cap. i.

[2] *Ibid.*, lib. I. cap. i.

not the codex of the evangelist, but immediately the rough boatman laid on the ground two sticks in the form of a cross, and erring in nothing, he swore upon it, as if it had been a beautiful cross. Then the priest, Don Martin, said to him: "Now, good man, I feel myself drawn to tell thee more safely everything. This is the Queen whom some time ago King Berengar made prisoner in wrath. We are fleeing. Be a faithful friend to us!" Therefore, praising God, he took them quickly across to the other side; offered them a big fish, and said to the Queen: "If by chance the omnipotent Lord God restore you to honour, I hope you will remember me." The boatman deposited them in the vicinity of a wood that borders on the lake, and the Queen remained there a whole week, adoring Christ faithfully, whilst the priest as her host, went secretly in search of bread. At last the Queen said, sighing: "How can I enjoy being here, if the continual thought of being recaptured agonises me? Oh, good priest, the Bishop of Reggio, Adelardo, always remained good friends with us, and now you might tell him how great is our distress, and perhaps he will find the means of removing us from here." Then the exiled priest, though wearied, set forth to Reggio, and when the Bishop knew who he was, he asked after the Queen, saying: "Tell me, I pray thee, what has happened to her, which I hope much to learn from thee"; and the priest replied: "She died in her dark prison." At the sad news the Bishop broke into exclamations of grief, and weeping said: "O great disaster! And the crime of it is most manifest!" The priest perceiving that the Bishop was horrified at the death of the Queen, and that he would rejoice greatly to know her still alive, suddenly told him that she still lived, and desired him to

offer her refuge. "I rejoice greatly that she lives," said the Bishop, but I do not know that I have under me any strong castle where she would be safe. However, there is Azzo, my soldier,[1] who has one called Canossa, in which, if he wills it, the Queen could hold out many years against the anger of the King." To-morrow, therefore, thou shalt take our horses and shalt go to Azzo, as I will show thee, and warmly begging him, thou shalt perhaps obtain that which thou desirest." At the dawn of the following day the priest was put on the road to Canossa, and, arrived there, Prince Azzo interrogated him closely as to what had happened to the Queen. And the priest replied that she had died in prison. Azzo with a full heart broke into bitter tears and lamentations. Then the other, seeing manifestly that he cried, said to him aside: "Ah! she lives, and desires to flee to thee, and to be by thee sheltered from danger." Hearing this, the Prince had his own horses taken out and galloped to where she was. It was the third hour of the day, fine and warm weather. . . . And when the sixth hour of the day arrived, high Canossa honoured itself as host of the illustrious Queen, together with her damsel. Afterwards, moved by all that had happened, Azzo sent a secret messenger to the Pope in Rome, supplicating him, and requesting him for advice in this matter, inasmuch as he wished to give the Queen as wife to Otto, whom the people of Alemannia obeyed. Pope John,[2]

[1] The Latin word *miles* means also 'vassal' according to Leibnitz and Muratori. See Don Davoli's notes on Domnizo, p. 277.

[2] Domnizo's history is at fault here, and it must have been to Pope Agapetus II., who was Pope from 946 to 955, that Azzo sent his messenger, since the events just narrated took place in the year 951, and Otto's marriage was celebrated on Christmas Day of that same year at Pavia, not at Verona. Agapetus's successor was Pope John XII.

a man of great probity, wrote commending his actions, and counselling him to carry his designs into effect.

'After all these things a nuncio of Azzo's, followed by a small escort, went to the King in Verona, in which city Otto had already arrived. Azzo then came to him bringing with him the Queen, who was there united to the King in wedlock, and then taking her with him, he returned immediately to his own land, promising Azzo that he would do great things for him hereafter. The Lombard King had not yet heard of the doings of the Queen, nor could he find out where she had taken refuge, but he heard at last that King Otto had been in Verona, and that this had happened by Azzo's help. Therefore, raging and storming, he collected soldiers, and came to Canossa, thinking to carry all before him. . . . But I am of stone, not wood. Azzo remained at my summit and with him prudent and wise men. Smite! O Berengar! Smite as you will with the darts! that death may gather in, the sooner, those that you have brought to break our fortress.'

A long Homeric struggle ensued around Canossa. Besieged for years she emerged at length triumphant. Otto was instated with honours, first as King at Milan, and finally confirmed in the title of Emperor by Pope John XII. in 962. He did not forget his friends, and Azzo, chief amongst them, was created Count, then Marquis, with sovereignty over Modena, Reggio, and a great part of Lombardy.

'And Azzo multiplied my Towers, and lifted up my walls to the heavens.[1] But was it not through me he became rich, through me that all came to him? It was

[1] Dom., lib. I. cap. ii.

therefore natural that all he had obtained that was beautiful and precious, helmets, shields, armour, swords and hatchets, should serve to adorn my vast halls.' Thus chants Canossa in her glory.

But it was not only for future warlike purposes, or in memory of his past victories that Azzo embellished and enlarged Canossa. He took care that it should also be celebrated for the beauty and sanctity of its church. Relics of many saints were conveyed there—those of St. Victor, Santa Corona, and above all, Sant Apollonio, to whom the church was dedicated, are specially mentioned. Rich and costly robes for the priests, chased vessels for the sacred offices were also bestowed upon the church, and with great pride Domnizo tells us of twenty crowns of gold and silver and the various chalices and sculptured tablets, with which the church was enriched. This was the foundation of the famous treasure of Canossa, which, more than a century later Matilda, her private resources being at an end, was obliged to melt down, in order to send the precious metal to Pope Gregory, who was in sore need of money to pay his troops.

Domnizo tells us, moreover, that Azzo further instituted at Canossa a college of monks to chant the Divine Office, and that this might be done more effectively 'he caused an organ to be constructed to accompany the voices of the singers.' It is interesting to note in passing that this is the first precise mention of any organ being built and placed in a church in Italy. The organ was probably conveyed to Canossa and placed in position between the years 970-976.[1]

Azzo's eldest son Rodolf died in the flower of his youth, the second Godfrey entered the Church and became

[1] See Don Davoli's notes to Domnizo, note 67, pp. 297-98.

Bishop of Brescia. Tedaldo, the youngest, succeeded his father, and right well did he maintain the family traditions in remaining faithful to the German kings, and adding to the territorial domains of the family. 'He was most renowned and dear to kings, and the Roman pontiffs who loved him much, and most sincerely, conceded to him the domain of Ferrara. He loved the Castle of Canossa no less than his faith; and it was he that had built near the Po, and in the neighbourhood of the waters of the Larione, the monastery of S. Benedetto, worthy of the Lord, desiring that a family of monks should be established there; and this is a most happy spot, since here true religion flourishes.'[1]

Tedaldo left three sons; the eldest one, his namesake, Bishop of Arezzo, is mentioned by the chroniclers as being a friend of Guido of Arezzo the musician, who dedicated to him a celebrated necrology. Conrad the youngest remained associated with his second brother Boniface, the successor to the marquisate; unfortunately he received a mortal wound at the battle of Coviolo, in 1030, and died shortly after from the effects of it. Boniface pursued the family vocation of acquiring territory, power and riches, content however to remain first among the princes of Italy rather than seek for any regal crown.

It would appear that before the death of Tedaldo, Boniface was associated with him in the government of his domains. Tedaldo is said to have called together his vassals and the counts over whom he had lordship, and made them pay homage to Boniface as their feudal lord.

Boniface was in many ways a typical mediæval lord. His early training under his father had fitted him for the

[1] Dom., lib. 1. cap. iii.

position he had inherited, while his own personal character, which was dominated by a large and never satiated ambition, made him the most remarkable 'Grand Seigneur' of his time. He was a singular man, with that strange blending of vice and piety characteristic of the Middle Ages. In some respects he was more enlightened than his contemporaries, for, far from despising learning and culture as did most warriors of that age, scornfully declaring that to write and read was only the employment of clerks, he encouraged the pursuit of the gentle arts in every way he could, and took delight in assembling under his roof all the light and the learning of Italy. In fact the court that he and his wife held at Mantua has been compared to that of Florence under the princes of the house of Medici: 'With so many magnificent spectacles and feasts that all posterity and all their contemporaries marvelled thereat.'[1] Yet while he showered money for pious oblations on churches and monasteries, he was not above stooping to various artifices to wrest lands and castles from the bishops, and heads of monastic institutions. He would offer a few miserable farms in exchange for a tract of territory or castle, declaring his intention of paying yearly rental for the same. But the rent was never paid and the lands remained in Boniface's hands, while the clerical party was too weak to enforce its claims. Muratori cites how many churches, castles, and monasteries were thus obtained from the Bishop of Reggio alone.

One incident may be given illustrating to what depths of ferocity Boniface could descend, were his anger aroused. In the year 1039 he had been as far north

[1] From a review on the *Corografia Mantovana*, by Giacomo Ottali.

as the Castle of Miroalto [1] to render help to the Emperor Henry III. against Odo, Count of Champagne, and after a successful campaign was returning to Italy. The corn lay ripe in the Burgundian fields, and he permitted his cavalry to damage the crops ruthlessly, and even to pasture in their midst. The people of the district, greatly resenting this wanton destruction, caught some of the stragglers of the mounted troops, and deprived them of their horses. In fury Boniface turned back, vowing vengeance. He planned an attack against a neighbouring castle, laying an ambush when the lord and his retainers sallied forth, and succeeded in making a large number of captives. He then ordered that all their nostrils and ears should be cut off. 'Three military shields were piled with these severed members,' says Fiorentini. Amongst the prisoners was the only son of a noble matron, who, half distraught with fear lest he should suffer such indignity, threw herself in front of Boniface, offering him her son's weight in silver if he might be spared. Boniface thrust her aside, brutally remarking that he was 'no merchant but a soldier,' and the deed was done. And Fiorentini adds, quoting from an earlier chronicle: 'She obtained further the bellicose response, "Absit ut hostes ferro capti redimantur argento"—"Far be it that what was captured by steel should be redeemed with silver."' (Fiorentini, lib. I. p. 36.)

In his later years Boniface devoted himself more than ever to Holy Church, surrounding himself with monks and clerics who continually sang psalms in the chapel

[1] Miroalto, to-day Morat or Mürten, situated in that part of ancient Burgundy which now constitutes the canton of Friburg in Switzerland, and not far from Neuchâtel. See Don Davoli, p. 320.

Facsimile of Boniface's signature, A.D. 1038 (reduced in size).
From a document preserved in the State Archives at Lucca.

of Canossa. He confessed his deeds of violence and all his sins, and for his acts of simony he even submitted to a pious flagellation at the hands of the Abbot Guido of Pomposa. On this account, mayhap, his evil deeds were covered with a cloak of Christian charity by many a monkish chronicler, while his upholding of the Church is glowingly described by Don Luchino da Mantova :[1] 'Boniface most illustrious Marquis of Mantua and Ferrara did not fall away or degenerate from his father Tedaldo, but conformed to him in all clemency and piety, and united in himself all those Qualities which go to form a rare and accomplished prince. . . . This generous prince had always a soul inclined to the Christian religion.'

Boniface's exalted position, and the high esteem in which he was held by the German Emperor, did not fail to bring him many enemies,[2] especially among the princes of Lombardy, who never let an opportunity pass of plotting his ruin. (Whatever his faults may have been, his loyalty to the Empire was unquestionable, though during the last years of his life this loyalty received a grievous shock.) Such an opportunity offered itself to Boniface's jealous fellow-countrymen at the death of Henry II., when Conrad was elected Emperor and King of Italy. Most of the Italian nobles refused to receive another German, and offered the crown elsewhere—to Robert of France, to his son Hugo, to William Duke of Aquitaine. Boniface remained faithful to Conrad, and in consequence the other princes of the

[1] Luchino, p. 12.

[2] 'The dukes [Boniface and Conrad] showing themselves strong and great against their enemies like true giants, many people rose up against them.' Dom., lib. I. cap. vi.

BONIFACE

FROM THE MS. OF DOMNIZO

realm, after having in vain tried to draw away Conrad (Boniface's brother) from his allegiance, descended upon the lords of Canossa and offered them battle at Coviolo, a mile and a half from Reggio. Although Boniface[1] issued forth victorious from this combat it was at a heavy price, since his brother died shortly afterwards from the effects of a wound received on the battlefield. The historian Muratori[2] tells us that when the Emperor Conrad descended into Italy in 1027 to have his election to the Italian throne ratified by Pope John XX., Lucca, the Tuscan capital, defied him, whereupon he subdued it, and Rainieri, the reigning Marquis of Tuscany, who had been active in the rebellion against the German allegiance, was despoiled of his possessions. These, together with the title of Marquis, it is supposed, were conferred upon Boniface by the Emperor, in return for the services he had rendered him. There are some divergences of opinion as to the exact date of Boniface's accession to the Lordship of Tuscany, and there is no documentary evidence to prove that he assumed the government of this state in 1027. The first time Boniface calls himself Duke and Marquis of Tuscany is in 1031, in a document quoted by Sigonio; and Jacopo, Bishop of Fiesole, in writing in 1032 of the founding of the canonicate at Fiesole, refers to Boniface as 'Most Serene Duke and Marquis of Tuscany.'[3] It is certain that

[1] 'The audacious lance of Boniface appeared almost a thousand cubits long to all his enemies, and the sword of Conrad a hundred cubits broad.'—Dom., lib. I. cap. viii. There is a tradition current that the family of Canossa, to this day residing in Verona, is descended from Conrad.

[2] *Annali d'Italia*, anno 1027.

[3] This letter is given in Ughelli's *Ital. Sac.*, tom iii.; also Rena, vol. ii. p. 60 *et seq.*

Boniface[1] took an active part in establishing Conrad on the throne of Italy, and quelled several rebellious towns, amongst others Pavia and Parma; the lands of Tuscany may therefore have been bestowed on him as a reward for these services. As a further mark of his esteem, Conrad honoured Boniface by concluding an alliance with him, no longer regarding him as a vassal of the Empire but as an independent prince. The relations between Conrad and Boniface seem to have been always of a most friendly nature, Conrad deeming it wise to do everything possible to conciliate so powerful an Italian ally, and Boniface upholding him loyally.

[1] It is somewhat difficult to ascertain exactly what the tities of Duke, Marquis, or Count implied at this period, but Muratori in his *Dissertazioni sulle Antichità Italiane* throws some light on the subject. Counts, he tells us, were originally the governors of one city only, but their jurisdiction often extended outside the city, and the tract of country they governed was called 'Comitatus' or 'Contado.' But there were exceptions to this rule, since we know that Tedaldo was Count of Modena and Reggio; and, on the other hand, in the year 994 Verona had two Counts. About the title of Duke there is some confusion. They were superior to Counts and could create them, but sometimes they too were rulers of only one city, and sometimes they had large territories.

The title of Marquis was taken from those provinces called 'Marches,' that is provinces on the confines of empires or kingdoms which had independent rulers, these tracts being conceded to certain vassals by Emperor or King on condition that they were to defend them against the neighbouring enemies. In time the superior Counts who had lands and cities to rule and who were first called 'conti provinciali'—provincial counts—took the title of Marquis to distinguish them from the lower order of counts (governors of cities). Then some Marquises had as well the title of Count to indicate that they were special rulers of some cities. Tedaldo is cited as: Thedaldus Marchio et Comes Comitatu Motinense.

These titles were not hereditary at first but became so gradually. In an account of a Council of Charlemagne it is written that after the Emperor the Counts were the first persons of the Empire. Therefore Counts were often called Princes. Counts, Marquises, and Dukes assisted at the election of the Emperors. They also had their special chambers of jurisdiction for certain offences, and these powers were subject to the Emperor alone, and they only yielded prerogative to special legates of the Emperor who were occasionally despatched to render justice on extraordinary occasions. See also Muratori, *Delle Antichità estensi*, vol. i. chap. v.

Conrad's successor, Henry III., however, did not pursue the same policy. When in 1046 he, together with his wife Agnes, descended into Italy for the Imperial coronation at Rome, they stayed on their way in Piacenza, where Boniface received and entertained them right royally. In course of a familiar conversation Henry expressed pleasure at the taste of a particularly powerful vinegar prepared at Canossa. Overjoyed at such an opportunity of proving his devotion and affection to his sovereign lord, Boniface hastened back to Canossa, where he ordered a flagon to be delicately wrought in silver, together with a silver car and a yoke of oxen, and filling the flagon with the choicest vinegar, he had all these placed in a real cart further ornamented with most costly draperies, and drawn by two white oxen. He despatched this princely gift to Henry, accompanied by a numerous band of pages and esquires. The following year, as the royal couple were on their way back from Rome, they were received in Mantua by the governor of that city, Boniface's deputy, who presented them with a hundred magnificent horses, and two hundred falcons equipped for the chase. The Empress Agnes expressed surprise at such a magnificent present, and Henry remarked that Boniface alone of all Italian, or German princes, could have vassals under him capable of bestowing such rich gifts.

But these incidents aroused the Emperor's fears and excited his jealousy, and from this time forth Boniface was looked upon with suspicion, and Henry proceeded by fair means or foul to undermine his power—nay, more than this, to try to make away with him altogether. He began by endeavouring to lure him out of Italy, promising him unbounded power, wealth, and estates in Germany, would he but return there with him. But

Boniface could not be tempted to leave his native land. Henceforth all sorts of means were used to entrap him. Upon one occasion Henry demanded his immediate attendance at a Council, intending that Boniface should be conducted to a remote room in the castle, and there kept prisoner. Henry was anxious to effect his capture as rapidly and as secretly as possible, for Boniface was too popular with his own vassals to risk raising a hue and cry about him. Boniface went, but attended by such a retinue that Henry was disconcerted, for some chance words that the Empress Agnes had let fall the day before had put the Duke upon his guard. When he reached the palace gates he was told that he alone could be admitted, but in a haughty way he thrust the guard aside, and his followers entered with him. He was then conducted from room to room, and at last admitted to the presence of Henry, who was *not* in Council, but alone. Henry terrified at seeing Boniface attended by such a retinue, feared that his plot had been discovered, and that Boniface's men had slain his guard, and had now come to take vengeance upon the Emperor himself. But when he saw the Duke's soldiers attempted nothing and paid him the usual obeisance, he pretended that he had only summoned Boniface for a very important and private Council. Boniface replied with similar artifice, regretting that as he only came to serve his Majesty, he should have entered his presence in such a manner, but the guard had refused to admit his retinue inside the palace at all, and having heard that his Majesty meditated a sudden departure from Italy, he feared these extraordinary orders had been the result of some court machinations to exclude his faithful followers and himself from the Royal Presence for some sinister reason.

He had therefore forced his way in thus, to assure his Majesty of his own fidelity and promptitude, together with that of his followers. Henry accepted the explanation with as good a grace as possible, and proceeded to offer some plausible reasons for the sudden summons he had given Boniface, concluding by recommending him in all things to be vigilant concerning the interests of the Empire.

This incident only served to increase Henry's dislike, jealousy, and distrust of Boniface's enormous power and personal sagacity, and the following morning he made a further attempt to secure his person, begging him to come and form part of the bodyguard for that night, thinking in this way he would come very slightly attended, and that, having posted a number of mercenaries about the town, it would be easy in the darkness to take him prisoner. Boniface rode forth, with fewer followers it is true, but these were armed to the teeth, and each bore a lighted torch attached to his lance, making the small company appear larger than it was, and the mercenaries evidently feared to attack it, for Boniface rode home in safety again when the night was over.

After the failure of these plots Henry was unwillingly obliged to leave Italy to attend to his rebellious subjects at home,[1] leaving Boniface in full possession of his wealth, territories, and immense power. Boniface

[1] The German historian Giesebrecht casts some doubt upon these stories of the Emperor's faithlessness to Boniface. Giesebrecht says further that somewhere about 1047 Boniface seems to have deserted the Emperor's cause, and to have entered into a secret alliance with the Tusculan barons, and probably also with Gisulf of Salerno. See notes to Giesebrecht's History, and also vol. ii. p. 436.

Frizzi (*Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara*, vol. ii.) says these attempts against Boniface took place 'about 1047.' It is possible therefore that Boniface's devotion to Germany had received some great check.

ultimately perished at the hands of assassins, during a hunting expedition in 1052,—it was said out of revenge for some of his tyrannical acts, but a certain suspicion lurks in one's mind that Henry may have been privy to Boniface's violent death. Domnizo, perhaps out of respect to Matilda, only remarks that 'Boniface abandoned this world,' and then describes his place of sepulture in Mantua.[1]

The historian Vedriani gives the following account of Boniface's death:[2] 'In Modena in the year 1051 there was occasion for great grief in the unhappy news of the death of the Marquis Boniface. Seven years previously in Brescia he had escaped from a plot against his life and against the State. The conspirators fled to Verona, which city for having offered them a refuge was taken and sacked, and many of their adherents were also banished from Mantua. Amongst these was one Scarpetti Canevari.

'The Marquis, already an old man, and no longer thinking of anything but the affairs of his soul, had a galley built to go to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Syria—not so much out of devotion as for a penitence for his sins, which, according to Hermannus Contractus, had gained for him the name of "tyrant." Now while this galley was being constructed he went one day a-hunting towards the river Oglio in a domain called Spineta, not far distant from Martino dall' Argine, a castle belonging at that time to the Prince of Bozzolo.

'In following a wild beast, he separated himself so far from his retainers that the barking of the dogs or the huntsman's horn was hardly to be heard. Dismounting

[1] Dom., lib. I. cap. xvi.
[2] Ved., vol i. p. 497 *et seq.*

from his horse to rest beneath the shade of a tree, he happened to be near a bush, where Scarpetta, who knew him, was lying hid, and he, moved by wickedness, and thinking to do a deed which would be pleasing to the enemies of the Marquis, put a poisoned arrow to his bow, and shot it straight at the heart of the unhappy Prince, who, hit in the left breast, expired at once. This unfortunate death was written in characters of blood and bewailed with many tears, not only by the Marchesa but by all his people. He was buried in the beautiful mausoleum with this epitaph :[1]

> '"Hic jacet egregius Dominus Bonifacius Marchio et Pater Serenissimae Dominae Comittissae Matildae Qui obit MLII. Die VI. Ma. II. INDCV.
>
> '"Here lieth the excellent Lord Boniface Marquis and Father of the Most Serene Lady Countess Matilda, who died on the 6th day of May 1052."'

From the day that Henry turned against Boniface,[2] 'the love of the lords of Canossa was tempered,' remarks Don Tosti,[3] 'and the whole of Boniface's lordship, which had been as a citadel of the Empire on the neck of Italy,

[1] Of the 'beautiful mausoleum' nothing remains to this day but an insignificant black stone let into the wall of the west side of the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral at Mantua. It was only after a long search that this tablet was found and identified by the present writer; the sacristan being positive that the Marquis Boniface was not buried there! The stone bears the Latin inscription given above.

[2] Besides being Duke of Tuscany Boniface is sometimes called Duke of Lucca, and Marquis of Tuscany, Lord of Ferrara, Verona, Mantua, Reggio, Parma, Lucca, Pisa, Florence, Pistoia, Modena, Count of Canossa, Duke of Spoleto, and Camerino. It is certain that at the death of Boniface no other Italian Prince could be found his equal in riches and power. The whole of Tuscany, the greater part of Liguria, Umbria, and Piceno, from the Cremona Alps to Viterbo, was under his sway.

[3] Tosti, lib. I. p. 37.

was converted into a refuge and defence, not only for the destinies of Italy but for those of the Church of Christendom as well.' This was indeed the turning-point in the policy of the house of Canossa. Up till now, its interests and that of the Empire had been one, and since the days of Atto and Otto the friendship and good feeling between Emperor and vassal lord had been maintained. Now through the Emperor's jealousy and treachery the situation was changed, and henceforth all its interests became purely Italian, entirely bound up with that of the Papacy. At first it looked to the Papacy for help and support, and in return the Papacy began to count upon this great feudal house as its strongest ally.

Boniface was twice married. Of his first wife Richilda [1] very little is narrated beyond the fact that she was the daughter of 'Guilberto Conte del Palazzo in Rogeneto,' [2] who was Vicar Imperial of Reggio in 1021, and another authority says Vicar Imperial in Verona. Very soon after her death,[3] Boniface set forth on a second

[1] Rena gives two documents concerning Boniface's first wife of the years 1016 and 1017 respectively. The first is a grant of Henry II. of certain lands in the Ferrarese country to Richilda. The second is the deed in which Richilda, together with her husband, bestows those lands on the abbey of Nonantula. In the first Richilda is only styled 'Countess,' and at the foot there is a cross with 'signum manus pro Richilde Comitissa.' In the second parchment Boniface simply calls himself 'Boniface Marquis,' and does not say of what territory. Muratori (*Ant. It.*, vol. i. p. 71) says that in the year 1004 Boniface made a donation to the abbey of Polirone in which deed he is entitled 'Marquis,' and mentions two other documents of the same year where he is called 'Bonifacius gloriosus Marchio.' As Tedaldo only died in 1007 those documents seem to imply that Boniface assumed the title of Marquis before the death of his father.

[2] Mellini, p. 12., quotes from Sigonio as to Guilbert's position at Verona. Mellini says further that Richilda died after 1034, and Boniface's second marriage took place in 1037.

[3] 'Our liege Lady Richelida ended her days without leaving any child, an only daughter having died before her, and when she left us the poor lost in

wooing. His choice fell on Beatrice,[1] daughter of the Duke of Lorraine, and Domnizo takes delight in describing Boniface's magnificent following, and the splendid home-coming of the bride. For three months they kept open house at Marengo, one of Boniface's castles. Precious perfumes were dispersed like water during the banquets, and by some mechanical means wine was made to run from the wells into rich vessels of silver, while delicate viands were served at the meals, and troupes of jongleurs and troubadours entertained the guests.[2]

Beatrice appears to have been a remarkable woman in all respects. During her husband's lifetime she evidently took but small part in public affairs, yet governed her household with wisdom, and is mentioned by one historian as a 'sapient, brilliant and learned princess.' The court at Mantua was a centre of light and learning, and Canossa was far famed for its brilliance and culture during the whole of Beatrice's reign there. Later, when called to govern, first in her son's name, and then during Matilda's long minority, she displayed the greatest sagacity and prudence.

The women of the house of Canossa appear to have been most fitting mates for their lords. Of Atto's wife, Hildegarde, it is written:[3] 'She was a princess adorned with every grace and of great worth, with a cultivated mind and pious spirit. A princess gifted with the art

her a great helper, as Domnizo testifies. She was buried with great pomp at Nogara, in the Veronese country, in a church endowed by her . . . where vestiges of her sepulchre are to be seen unto this day (A.D. 1666).'—Ved., vol. i. p. 494.

[1] Beatrice was a niece of the Empress Gisela, wife of Conrad II. She and her sister Sophie had been educated at the Imperial Court, and were looked upon by Gisela as her adopted daughters. See Giesebrecht, vol. ii. pp. 276, 318.

[2] Dom., lib. I. cap. x.

[3] See here Dal Pozzo, p. 149.

of governing wisely. Prudent and good, a wise adviser, exhorting her husband to good works, a lady of sound judgment and singular prudence in governing, inclined to works of piety.'

Guilla, the wife of Tedaldo, is thus described by Dal Pozzo : [1] 'Born of the Counts of the Rhine, a most pious princess, appreciated by every rank of people'; and Domnizo says : [2] 'The Duchess Guilla, who, for her works of piety, was dear alike to great and small.'

[1] Dal Pozzo, p. 179.

[2] Dom., lib. I. cap. v.

CHAPTER III

Birth of Matilda probably at Lucca in 1046—Marriage of Beatrice with Godfrey of Lorraine—Matilda's Betrothal by proxy to Godfrey's Son in 1053—Anger of Henry III. who detained Beatrice as Prisoner—Reconciliation of Henry and Godfrey—Death of Henry III. and return of Beatrice and Godfrey to Italy in 1057.

FROM this illustrious house, founded by Siegfried, noted for its noble women and warlike men, sprang Matilda, who played so great a part in the history of her day. Although the fact [1] has not been absolutely proved, it is almost certain she was born in Lucca, or at the Castle of Porcari a few miles distant. Beatrice purchased the Castle of Porcari in 1044,[2] and in 1047 it is known that Boniface was in Lucca adjudging various difficulties amongst his subjects.

Boniface left three children, Frederick or Boniface, Matilda, and 'Beatrice' or 'Beatricio.' It is a curious fact that about the sex of the last-named child there appears some doubt; in some genealogies it is called Beatrice and referred to as a girl, in others, where Boni-

[1] Historians are greatly divided as to which city should be accredited with the honour of being Matilda's birthplace. Mantua and Modena, Cremona and Verona are mentioned, and many others. (See Don Davoli, p. 352.) 'She was born in Mantua and was given the name of Matilda in baptism to renew the glorious memory of Saint Matilda, Empress, daughter of Theodoric, Duke of Saxony,' writes Vedriani (vol. i. p. 496).

In speaking of the meeting between Henry V. and Matilda in the year 1111 Dean Milman says: 'He conversed with her in German, with which, as *born in Lorraine*, she was familiar' (*Latin Christianity*, book VIII. chap. ii.).

[2] Fiorentini, lib. I. p. 35.

face is said to have left two sons, the name is written Beatricio.[1]

Beatrice was left sole guardian of her children, and although she appears to have governed wisely and ably, she was fully alive to the dangers of her position as a defenceless widow with vast wealth and territory, a ready prey for unscrupulous freebooters. As a matter of policy therefore, she contracted a second marriage with Godfrey of Lorraine in 1053. It is said that the Sovereign Pontiff Leo IX., being in Mantua on his way from Germany, performed the marriage ceremony in that city in the church of San Pietro; at the same time Matilda, then a child of seven, was solemnly affianced to Godfrey's son by a previous marriage, generally known as Godfrey the Hunchback.

This alliance aroused a storm of anger on the part of Henry, and he declared it ought not to have taken place without his permission. Godfrey of Lorraine was in open revolt against Germany, and Beatrice had committed the sin of lèse-majesty in marrying the enemy of her sovereign. She was a widow and only a woman, and could not command in Tuscany, and it belonged to

[1] In the history of Riccobaldo, a Ferrarese of the thirteenth century, mention is made (p. 347) of three children, Rudolf, Frederick, and Matilda, and the 'two first died during one of Boniface's absences from Italy.'

Mario Equicola (p. 26) says Boniface had two sons and one daughter. Don Luchino (p. 13) mentions *Beatricio* a boy; this child Beatricio, or Beatrice, evidently died at an early age.

There seems a great uncertainty, however, about these children, the boy is sometimes called Frederick, sometimes Boniface; is it probable that there were two sons? In 1053 Beatrice made a donation to the abbey of Fenonica for the souls 'of my son and of my daughter' (see Overman, p. 123). Yet we are told that the only son did not die till 1055 (pp. 123-124).

On the other hand, this is not conclusive evidence since Rena who gives the whole document (vol. ii.) remarks that Frederick, the son referred to in the deed of gift, died in the following year, as if it were not unusual to make a donation for the souls of the living. The words used are 'pro remedio animae quondam Bonefacii Marchionis et animae filii et filiae meae.'

the Emperor to give the investiture to the male child. For Henry insisted that the Duchy of Tuscany and all Boniface's vast possessions in Italy were only held under feudal tenure from himself. Godfrey was a man of great force of character and quite capable of stirring up the whole of Italy against the Emperor, so that Henry's objections were not groundless; but the means he took to protect himself were of questionable integrity. He descended into Italy the following spring, 1055, was in Verona in April and celebrated Easter at Mantua. Possibly both Godfrey and Beatrice thought it would be well to attempt a reconciliation, and they first of all sent ambassadors with protestations of their good faith, and bearers of the following message :—

'That he, Godfrey, had espoused the Marchesa Beatrice, Henry's "sister," with the fullest concurrence of Pope Leo, and with all those honours which were due to a princess of her rank. This he had done, *not* to plot against "the majesty of Cæsar," nor to be created King of Italy, but in order to establish himself far away from those States where he knew he was in little favour, and also to do away with the suspicion that Germany bore him of attempting to reobtain the greater and better part of his dukedom, which his ancestors and his fathers before him had possessed for long series of years in *feudo nobile*.' The ambassadors added: 'That he would be entirely content with the dowry of his wife, and as he was a relation, he would be a faithful subject —nor did it behove a prince to live and die in a minor condition than that of a prince.'[1]

[1] Vedriani, vol. ii. p. 10. Frederick, Duke of Upper Lorraine, father of Beatrice, died without leaving a son. His dukedom was then bestowed on Gozelo of Lower Lorraine, Godfrey's father. 'Thus were the two duchies united under one ruler.' See Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 276.

Then after having obtained a safe-conduct, Beatrice, taking with her her little son, and accompanied by her mother,[1] went down to Mantua in the hopes of melting the Emperor's heart. But Henry remained implacable, and at first refused to see her. Vedriani[2] says that Beatrice 'dissimulating her fears' met the Emperor at Trent, and with great difficulty obtained an audience. When in his presence she said 'with all submission'—That she had dared to present herself thus before his Majesty, knowing within herself that she had done nothing, which for reasons of State, she was not permitted to do. That, while she was hardly thinking of it, the Holy Pontiff had, in his own person, arranged the marriage with the Duke, and concluded and celebrated it with his own hands. She herself had consented to it, in order to be provided with a defender for her States who would not be obliged to live on the other side of the Alps—a noble and free princess, uniting herself thus to a prince noble and free, without any ulterior designs.—She supplicated his Majesty, therefore, to remember that it was not a just thing to impute to her as a crime that which she had done through necessity;—that which in the Roman Empire ladies of high rank were always permitted to do.' This spirited address had no effect on the Emperor, for without regard to the safe-conduct he had given, he kept her a close prisoner in her own city of Mantua, and treated her with the utmost rigour. Henry was only too glad to keep these two as hostages, above all to have Frederick in his hands, so as to deprive Godfrey of every excuse for administering the affairs of

[1] Matilda, mother of Beatrice, was daughter of the Duke Herman II. of Suabia and sister to the Empress Gisela.

[2] See here also Lambert of Hersfeld, ann. 1055, p. 174 (*Chron. rer. Germ.*).

his step-son. The Emperor was careful, however, not to subject the little boy to the same rough treatment that his mother underwent.

In spite of these precautions the boy died,[1] and Matilda therefore was left sole heiress, and Muratori[2] says: 'She assured herself against all violence by retiring to the impregnable rock of Canossa.' Probably her step-father thought it advisable to secure her safety thus. On the other hand Fiorentini seems to think that Matilda was often at Lucca during the years of her mother's imprisonment, so that it is possible that she passed her time between the two. Godfrey, ill-pleased that his wife and mother-in-law should remain in the hands of Henry, departed into Germany, to stir up rebellion against him there, and Henry was forced to leave Italy, taking his illustrious prisoners with him. In a very interesting passage the historian Vedriani[3] tells us, that Beatrice went willingly in order to see again Germany 'where she was born,' and she did not grieve at parting from Matilda, knowing that she was high-spirited, and that she was looked upon as sovereign Lady by both the Godfreys—father and son—and '*respected*.'

Godfrey, together with Baldwin, Count of Flanders, was able to create considerable disturbance in Germany, but about the middle of the following year (1056) Godfrey became reconciled to the Emperor. The details of this pacification are wanting, but it is evident that Henry restored him to full favour and liberated Beatrice. From

[1] A story was circulated that the Emperor had made away with Matilda's brother and sister. This seems entirely incredible. See Arnulf of Milan (lib. IV. p. 118).

[2] *Annali d'Italia*, anno 1055; also Don Tosti, lib. I. p. 56.

[3] Vedriani, vol. ii. p. 16.

documentary evidence[1] it is known that Godfrey was at the Imperial Court at Treves on the 30th June 1056. A few months later, after the death of Henry III., when a council was assembled at Cologne, Victor II. presiding in the name of the young King Henry, the rebel vassals Godfrey and Baldwin of Flanders were formally restored to royal favour. Godfrey's right to govern the Italian States in conjunction with his wife during Matilda's minority was recognised, and shortly afterwards the two Tuscan rulers left the North and returned to Italy.

[1] See Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 527.

CHAPTER IV

A Short Summary of the Papacy with regard to the Question of Investitures—The Part played by the Emperors—Charlemagne —Otto the Great—Charter of Henry II.—Hildebrand the Monk —Education in Rome and subsequent History—Attaches himself to Gregory VI. and accompanies him into Exile—Journey to Rome with Leo IX.—Councils at Rome, Pavia, Rheims and Mainz, 1048.

FOR the better understanding of the events which immediately followed the return of Godfrey and his wife into Italy in 1057, it is necessary to take a slight survey of what was occurring elsewhere in the peninsula during the years in which Matilda was growing from childhood to womanhood. Indeed to trace events to their sources we must go back some considerable way, since we have here to consider, if only in a very superficial degree, the history of the Papacy, and what events conspired to bring about that struggle for temporal and spiritual supremacy in which Pope and Emperor were engaged for so many generations.

Some two and a half centuries earlier, the Pope had been only Bishop of Rome with very limited civil authority over the city, but owing to the rivalries of the many contending factions, he had often been called to fill a position of supreme temporal power for the time being, and from this fact his powers and position were gradually strengthened.

From the North, however, came a common foe, against

which Pope and Romans, people and clergy united. Various hordes of barbarians descended into Italy, some of them absolutely hostile, some, since they were professing Christians, with ideas of conciliating the Bishop of Rome, and of thereby acquiring for themselves more power and territory. For the sake of expelling the former, the help of the latter was solicited, and again there were cases when foreign aid was called in to quell the rebellious Roman nobles and restore some order. Then as reward for services rendered, the Bishop of Rome, later called Pope, would bestow the kingdom of Italy, or the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, upon Frankish or German conqueror, little right as he had to do so. At the same time, the more orderly amongst the Roman princes and people were rendered willing to receive as King or Emperor the foreigner who succeeded in removing the oppression under which they were labouring at the time. Rome, remembering her past glories of Empire, still dreamed that an Emperor might restore them,[1] while to the barbarian invader the name of 'Cæsar' had magic in its sound, and Italy proved an allurement so strong that Frankish monarchs and German kings were drawn thither, neglecting their home ties, their home responsibilities, on the chance of establishing a firm foothold on 'this side of the mountains,' as the Italian phrase has it. History repeated itself over and over again—in the case of French Pepin first called 'Patricius' of Rome and Pope Stephen III. in 754, of the mighty Charlemagne and Popes Adrian I. and Leo III. in 774 and 800, and of Otto the Great and Pope John XII. in 962.

[1] 'Ce titre d'empereur qui, donné dans Rome par le pape, semblait aux imaginations confuses du moyen âge, l'investiture de Dieu transmettant l'héritage des Césars.'—Villemain, vol. i. p. 160.

Each succeeding king or emperor bestowed gifts on the Roman See. Charlemagne left immense treasure at the Vatican, and acquired for the Pope the towns of Capua, Sora, and Arpi, several small Tuscan towns, and amongst others Viterbo and Soano, reserving, however, for the citizens the rights of municipal government.

Charlemagne at his coronation promised by a solemn oath to protect and defend the Holy Roman Church, and the election of the Pope was henceforth supposed to be confirmed by the Emperor.

Before Otto the Great was crowned Emperor (he who married that Adelaide, whose fortunes we have followed for a brief space in Chapter I.), he took the following oath:[1] 'To thee, Lord Pope John, I, Otto, promise and swear, by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and by the wood of the cross that gives life, and by the relics of the saints, that if, by the permission of GOD, I enter into Rome, I will exalt, according to my power, the Holy Roman Church, and thee its head, and that never shall thy life be taken away by my will or advice, by my avowal or orders, that I will hold no court, nor render any justice without thy advice on such things as concern thee, within the city of Rome.'

Otto hereafter made magnificent presents to the Pope, confirmed the donations of Charlemagne, granted further privileges to the Papacy, and distributed largesse to the barons, the clergy, and the people of Rome.[2]

Some fifty years after, the relations between the Emperor Henry II. and Pope Benedict VIII. appear to have been of the friendliest, the Pope meeting the

[1] See Villemain, vol. i. p. 166, also Bonitho (ed. Jaffé), p. 588 *et seq.*, for various versions of the oath of Otto.

[2] Richter, p. 89. For the document of Otto's privileges to the Church see *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, vol. i. p. 322.

Emperor in January 1014 at Ravenna, where they held a great synod together, and vital matters, both ecclesiastical and lay, were discussed and amicably settled. Later, in 1020, the year of the Emperor's coronation, a similar friendly synod was held in Rome, where both the great rulers of Church and State presided. In that self-same year the Pope paid a visit of state to Germany and consecrated the Church of St. Stephen at Bamberg, when the Bishopric of Bamberg was assured by the Emperor to the See of St. Peter, and great rejoicings were held throughout the land. It would seem almost as if the ideal of Dante's *De Monarchia* were realised, and the Church and State were exercising each its special function.

'Wherefore man had need of a twofold directive power according to his twofold end, to wit, the supreme pontiff to lead the human race, in accordance with things revealed, to eternal life; and the Emperor to direct the human race to temporal felicity in accordance with the teachings of philosophy. And since none, or few (and they with extremest difficulty) could reach this port, were not the waves of seductive greed assuaged and the human race left free to rest in the tranquillity of peace, this is that mark on which he who has charge of the world and is called the Roman prince should chiefly fix his mind, to wit, that on this threshing-floor of immortality life should be lived in freedom and peace.'[1]

A contemporary writer (Bebo of Bamberg[2]) speaks glowingly of those days. 'The peasant rejoices in the

[1] *De Monarchia*, book III. pp. 277-278; translated by P. H. Wicksteed, Temple Classics.

[2] 'Agricolae namque laetantur in campo, clericalis virtus gaudet in choro, pro distributis divinae gratiae donis unusquisque concessis instruitur studiis et per virtutis tuae defensiones optatas dives sibi videtur ipsa paupertas.'—From Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 173. For original see *Epistolae Bambergenses*, 6 (ed. Jaffé, vol. v.).

field, the cleric in the choir, every one can improve the gifts bestowed on him by Heaven undisturbed, and under the protection of Imperial power, even poverty seems rich.'

Yet in spite of friendly relations between individual Popes and Emperors, in spite of the occasional cessation of hostilities, and their concerted action now and then in putting a stop to abuses, and amicably discussing affairs of Church and State, it is undeniable that there was an undercurrent of caution—that the one power strove to safeguard itself against the other, that on the whole they grew to look upon each other as deadly rivals.

For there is a charter extant of this very time, of the days of Henry II., which although it renews the privileges of Otto the Great and confirms the Church in many of her possessions, yet it sets forth clearly the relative position of Pope and Emperor. The Popes' claims to several towns in Tuscany, and their dependencies, to the exarchate of Ravenna, to the Sabine territory and its dependencies, to the isle of Corsica, and a crowd of domains in Lombardy, to several towns in Apulia, Naples, and to Sicily 'when God should deliver it over into the hands of the Emperor'![1] are confirmed. And in return for these concessions the Emperor reserves to himself an important part in the Pope's election, in making the clergy and people of Rome take a solemn oath, that no freshly elected Pontiff should be consecrated until he had sworn in the presence of the Imperial envoys and the people, to uphold and maintain the rights of the Empire. Further, that every year the Pope's envoys should report to the Emperor in what manner the governors and judges

[1] See *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, vol. iii. p. 554; 'Necnon patrimonium Sicilie, si deus nostris illud tradiderit manibus.'

were administering justice in the lands of the Church, and, on the other hand, that imperial commissioners were to inform the Pope of all complaints they had heard, so that a remedy could be sent immediately, either by the Pope, or by fresh envoys of the Emperor.[1]

Thus it will be seen that each power was jealous of the other, and each tried to gain the ascendency. It will readily be understood how factions were hereby developed, and how unscrupulous men would side now with this party, now with that, whichever might happen to be momentarily the stronger.

As the riches and territories of the Holy See increased, so did her authority, and in the case of the German emperors, who finally superseded all others, as rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, the Popes gradually took upon themselves to say that, as the Emperor's election could only be ratified by their sanction, they had the right to object to and annul that election,[2] and the Emperor declared that, since the Pope could only be Pope by virtue of the protection of the Emperor's power, he had an equal right to object to the choice of the bishops and clergy. In many cases the Emperor seemed justified in objecting, when, for instance, men of notoriously bad morals were raised to the Pontificate, or when

[1] This charter is believed to have been given in 1020 at Bamberg or Fulda after the Emperor's return from Rome, and the Pope's visit to Germany.

[2] See Bryce on the subject of Charlemagne and Leo III., chaps. iv. and v. Also the letter of Archbishop Siegfried of Mainz to Pope Alexander II. in the spring of 1066: 'As the crown of our kingdom and the diadem of the whole Roman Empire has been given to St. Peter into thy hands.' And Peter Damian's threat at the Council of Frankfort, 1069, that if Henry IV. should put away his wife Bertha, the Pope would withhold from him the Imperial Crown. Siegfried's letter is quoted by Giesebrecht (vol. iii. p. 130) who says further that Siegfried addressed a second letter to the Pope in the autumn of 1066, couched in the same terms. For an account of the Council of Frankfort see Giesebrecht, vol. iii. pp. 149, 150.

there came the great outcries against simony, and even the Holy See itself was bought and sold.

Besides these difficulties about the supreme Head of the Church and Empire, a further note of discord was added to the turmoil by the emperors occasionally arrogating to themselves the right of appointing bishops to the various ecclesiastical sees contrary to the Pope's wish. In many cases, it is true, the bishops were feudal lords and held vast estates, so it behoved the Emperor to have some say in their election; but that the whole matter should be taken out of the hands of the Church was a direct usurpation of a part of her express function.

So, as a small cloud on the horizon destined to grow into a mighty storm, came the struggle over the 'investitures,' which lasted for centuries, producing heroes and fanatics, involving the fate of nations, and causing Italy to become one vast battlefield for the rival parties of Guelf and Ghibelline.

'These times of terrible confusion, and centuries of unhappy memory,' writes Muratori, 'in which one witnesses the sad spectacle of sons fighting against fathers, subjects against their lawful princes and emperors, advocates of the Church against the Church itself, and the sacred pastors, in their divisions, forgetting entirely the character they had to uphold, forgetting alike sacred laws and ecclesiastical discipline. The sovereign Pontiff willed that he should no longer have to depend on the approbation of the Emperor for his election or consecration, and that the election of bishops should be left to conventions of the same, and that it should not be lawful for emperors or the princes to give the investitures to bishops and abbots with the ring and the pastoral staff; the which had really opened the door

to a thousand scandalous acts of simony. The emperors, on the other hand, sustained their pretensions by quoting ancient usages, founded on several pontifical decrees, and on the rights of the Regalia, of which a donation had been made by antecedent " Augusti " to the Church, with the obligation, they said, to recognise imperial authority . . . so a most lamentable schism was caused, with other disorders of which the historians speak at length. In this confusion, the princes, the bishops, and the people, no less of Germany than of Italy, followed that party which seemed to them the more just, or the more useful, and those people may not be wrong who think that many again listened to, or followed, the secret persuasion of their own interests, which ought certainly to be the last, but is often the first motive, and the most efficacious counsellor in our resolutions.'[1]

The question whether the Pope's election should rest entirely in the hands of the clergy was the chief point in that part of the conflict which raged during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, aggravated, no doubt, in several acute crises by the characters of the Emperors Henry IV. and V.

Although Henry II. was called ' saint,' and was capable of acting in concert with a Pope for the general weal of Christendom, as we have already seen, his allegiance to the Church was not entirely undivided, for he was jealous of ecclesiastical authority and kept the bishoprics and abbeys of his realm subordinate to himself. He granted these high offices to men likely to favour his interests—if the abbots resisted his will, he would change them, at the same time insisting that severe discipline should be maintained amongst the monks, and that they should

[1] Muratori, *Antichità Estensi ed Italiane*, vol. i. p. 14.

yield full obedience to whichever abbot it was his sovereign pleasure to place over them. His successor, Conrad the Salic, was of a different stamp. It is true that after his coronation in Rome a great synod[1] was held on the 6th of April 1027 at the Lateran, and here again both Pope and Emperor presided, and after some ecclesiastical disputes had been settled, matters of a more secular and personal nature, as well as political affairs, were discussed. The close union of Church and State exhibited here is worthy of notice. Yet on the whole Conrad had no strong feelings towards Church reform; he was too much occupied with the safeguarding and developing of his own power within his own realm to bestow much attention on the affairs of the Roman Church, so that for a time under the house of Tusculum—that house which gave to Rome so many worthless Popes—the hold of the Papacy over matters temporal was weakened. It was to the influence of Conrad's son, Henry III., in reforming the Papacy from without, to the

[1] To students of English history it may be of value to note that King Canute was present at this synod, and the extract that Giesebrecht gives (vol. ii. p. 249) from Canute's letter to the English bishops is extremely interesting: 'Pope John and the Emperor Conrad convened a great assembly of Princes at the Easter festival in Rome; all the Princes from Monte Gargano, as far as the shores of the sea near Rome, were present. They received me with much consideration, and honoured me with beautiful presents, the Emperor especially paid me much honour, with many costly gifts and magnificent mantles and raiment. I treated with the Emperor, the Pope and other Princes who were present, for the needs of my people, the English as well as the Danes, especially so that better conditions and safe conduct should be granted to them on the road to Rome, and that henceforth so many of the passes should not be denied to them, nor should they be burdened with heavy tolls on the way. The Emperor considered my demands very just, and King Rudolf (of Burgundy), in whose hands those passes rest especially, and the other Princes received commands to allow henceforth all my subjects—merchants as well as Pilgrims—to proceed over the passes unmolested and free of tolls under safe conduct to Rome, and in like manner to return home.'

influence of a greater mind than Henry's, that the Church once more lifted up her head, and renewed her twofold struggle—the struggle for temporal supremacy, in order to have the material power to strengthen herself in the deadlier struggle against the vices of the day. But in the days of Henry III. there was a moment of respite in the conflict, since Pope and Emperor were at unison over matters of reform.

For the spiritual supremacy of Rome first and above all things, for her right on earth to bind and loose, Hildebrand, afterwards Gregory VII., lived and died. Before he rose to power, there were not wanting Popes who felt that if Rome were to prove herself worthy of resisting the might of the Emperor she must first set her own house in order. But it was the monk Hildebrand, 'that ardent flagellator of the Church,' who actually brought about the crusade against simony and the concubinage of the priests, who stimulated, advised and encouraged Pope after Pope to untiring efforts in the way of reform. For Hildebrand's was a master-mind with that happy combination of strength and imagination capable of achieving great things. He saw what a terrible position it was for the Church, which hitherto had been the supreme court of appeal against sin, disorder, and oppression, to have its dignitaries called into court as criminals, and what retrogression it would mean if, in future, moral force were to count as nothing, and brute force were to have the pre-eminence. As a writer on those times remarks :[1] 'It was not enough to preach to the people "Believe in Christ," the Redeemer of every injustice, since the ministers of Christ were committing fornication with the workers of iniquity.'

[1] Don Tosti, lib. I. p. 49 (ed. 1859).

Hildebrand stands out from the background of history as one whose singleness of purpose was complete, whose whole life was given undividedly to one object, in whom there was no swerving from the path he had chosen, no compromise, and no sign of weakness. Calumny has been unsuccessful against him ; even those who would detract from the greatness of his fame by laying stress on his ambition, can hardly say there was anything base about it, since it was never his own glory or his own advancement that he sought, but always that of the Master he served.

Like that of many another great man, his life was of humble beginning. Born of obscure parents about 1013, at the little village of Rovaco near Soana, a few miles from Orbitello, he was sent at an early age to the monastery of Santa Maria sull' Aventino in Rome, to be educated by his uncle the abbot, so that from his childhood he was, as he himself says,[1] 'brought up in the house of St. Peter.' Later on he went to the celebrated monastery of Cluny,[2] at that time renowned for the austerity of its rule; it is not known whether he completed his novitiate there or at Santa Maria, but the years

[1] 'Debito amore apostolorum principis, qui me ab infantia mea sub alis suis singulari quadam pietate nutrivit et in gremio suae clementiae fovit' (*Reg.*, i. 39). 'Sanctus Petrus a puero me domo sua dulciter nutrierat' (vii. 23). 'Audi me servum tuum, quem ab infantia nutristi' (iii. 10, A).

[2] Cluny, a Benedictine abbey situated in the ancient kingdom of Burgundy, lying to the north-west of the town of Mâcon, was founded in 909 and became later the mother-house of thousands of abbeys scattered over Europe. Its founder, William the Pious, Duke of Aquitaine, in endowing it, freed it from all submission to civil powers, and from the very first, the election of the Abbot rested with the monks themselves. Cluny was able therefore to take up and maintain an independent position in the great struggle between ecclesiastical and temporal power, and the whole of its traditions rested on the idea that the Church should be absolutely free and unhampered, with regard to the election of her bishops and pastors.

passed at Cluny amid the good Benedictines must have had great influence upon his character. From there he is said to have visited the German court, where he preached so eloquently that Henry III. remarked he had never before heard the Word of God expounded with such conviction.

Returning to Rome in 1044, he witnessed the Church of Rome at one of its most degraded periods. After the Tusculan barons had disgracefully caused to be elected to the Papal See a boy of twelve, Benedict IX.,[1] after a misrule of ten years, this feeble and depraved Pope (whom the Romans had twice before driven out, and who had been twice reinstated, it is said, by Imperial favour) roused the anger of the citizens to such a pitch by his excesses, that once more they cast him out from their midst and appointed John, Bishop of Sabina, who assumed the name of Sylvester III. and is said to have paid Benedict for this privilege. But this new Pope had not sufficient strength of character to make himself master of Rome, and at the beginning of the year 1045, Benedict, by the aid of his relatives and their ill-gotten gains, was able once more to resume the tiara, Sylvester retiring to his erstwhile bishopric. Benedict's position, however, was untenable, and now there appeared a third claimant for the Papacy in the person of John Gratian the arch-presbyter, of the Church of Saint John of the Latin Gate. He was one of the most religious

[1] This account of the years 1044-45 is given mainly from Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 410, etc., and from the Chron. Mon. Cass. of Desiderius in the appendix to the *Sacred Dialogues*.

There are many confusing versions of what occurred in Rome at this period. Some historians, Stephens for instance, say that the three Popes were in possession of Rome simultaneously; others, Villemain, Sismondi, Cantù, and Lanziani, mention yet another claimant, 'John XX.,' and say that John Gratian assumed the Pontificate only after the other three were deposed.

amongst the clergy, a man greatly respected by the more order-loving amongst the citizens, and to his Church many offerings were made. With the large sums of money in his possession, he proceeded to buy out Benedict, this time successfully, and in May 1045 was consecrated in Rome under the name of Gregory VI.

To a man imbued with a sense of what the Church of God *should* mean, the state of anarchy prevailing in her midst during these years must have been a most appalling spectacle, and have served to engrave more deeply in Hildebrand's heart the resolve that in the future these things should cease. For throughout Italy the most frightful disorder existed. The high-roads, which were nothing better than ill-kept tracks, were infested by brigands who respected no man. Pilgrims to Rome itself were frequently plundered and murdered. In the neighbourhood of Rome the nobles, often no better than robbers themselves, pillaged the country under the pretence of punishing the followers of one or other of the antipopes, while she possessed within her walls hardly one cleric untainted with the sin of simony. The city itself presented a scene of murder and bloodshed; even the altars of the churches were not held sacred, for the offerings deposited thereon were carried off immediately by evil men, who spent the proceeds in rioting and debauch.

Yet about this time, on the other hand, many a monk and many a hermit was uplifting his voice against the vices of the priesthood, and endeavouring by preaching and by example to turn men from their evil ways to lead better lives. Here and there they were successful in winning over some disciples, or in effecting a real reform in the life of some great feudal lord. Amongst

these isolated teachers we may notice in passing Peter Damian, the hermit monk of Avellana near Gubbio, Romuald at Camaldoli, John Gualberto at Vallombrosa, and the far-famed Abbot Guido of Pomposa.

The new Pope, however, was eager for reform, and proceeded at once to administer justice with a firm hand.[1] He had murderers tried by court of law, and condemned to death; he levied troops, and when sentence of excommunication failed, he retook by force the Church lands, which had been seized unlawfully by the Roman nobles.

Years before on the Aventine he had known Hildebrand, and had been struck by the boy's abilities. He now appointed him one of his chaplains and showed him great favour.

Gregory's rule, however, was a short one. Although the question of the Papacy appeared to have been satisfactorily settled, there still lingered an element of discontent in Rome, for the two antipopes had not been entirely disposed of, and counted some adherents, and there was a strong feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the strictest of the clergy and laity, owing to the fact that Gregory had purchased the Papacy. Appeals were made to the Emperor, then on his way to Rome to be crowned, that he should come and settle the matter once and for all. A council was held at Sutri, in the presence of the Emperor and many princes of the Church, where the Bishop of Sabina's claims were first disposed of. He was judged guilty of simony and condemned to pass the rest of his days in a monastery. Then Gregory's cause was tried. He defended himself well by saying that having amassed riches, he thought he could not

[1] See *Vitae Rom. Pont.* (Mur., *Rer. It. Script.*, vol. iii. pt. II. p. 343).

employ them better than by taking the pontifical power into his own hands and using it honestly and for the general good of the Church. He frankly avowed his bargain with Benedict, and was convinced at length that he had done wrong in this matter. Thereupon he himself acknowledged his guilt, descended from the pontifical throne, and laid aside his episcopal garb. Benedict was not present at this synod, and no conclusion was arrived at as to his claims. However, a few days later in Rome, at another great synod convened by the Emperor, Benedict was formally deposed.

Henry had acted with great determination and decision. He was not averse to keeping the bishoprics and livings of his own dominions within his own hands, nor to appointing German bishops to Italian sees, but his opinions as to simony were most pronounced, and the scandal in the Roman Church had to be put down with a strong hand. It now remained for him to appoint a new Pope, and for once the Romans were willing to abide by his decision, and they accepted unquestioned the Emperor's nominee. No fitting Italian cleric was to be found, and Henry's choice lighted upon Suidiger, Bishop of Bamberg, who was forthwith declared Pope under the title of Clement II. Suidiger had lived a most blameless life, and in his own bishopric was much beloved. He accepted with great hesitation the honours thrust upon him, and shortly before his death, he wrote with yearning of his beloved church at Bamberg, calling her his 'friend,' his 'sister,' his 'bride,' his 'pure white dove,' expressing the grief with which he had renounced her, and the joy with which, had God willed it, he would have led there a quiet retired life.

Here in Rome all was changed. On Christmas Day

1046 Suidiger was consecrated Pope, and on the self-same day Henry and his wife Agnes received from him the Imperial Crowns. It was indeed a great day for the German domination in Italy. A German Pope to be crowning the German Emperor and Empress, a German army encamping round the walls of Rome, and received everywhere within the city with signs of joy and satisfaction.

Hildebrand accompanied the deposed Gregory into exile in Germany, and, the latter dying shortly after, Hildebrand returned to Cluny where he was made prior. Clement II. only survived his predecessor a short while, and in 1048 another German subject of Henry's was elected Pope, Damasus II., who enjoyed his dignity for twenty days:—killed by poison, said the Germans; by the judgment of God, said the Italians. However this may have been, the Romans were for the moment singularly submissive to the Emperor, for they sent a deputation to him, asking him to nominate a fresh Pope. Henry complied by choosing Bruno, Bishop of Toul, a distant cousin, 'a man of great piety and of an imposing exterior,' says one historian. At an assembly of bishops and nobles at Worms the Emperor's choice was fully ratified. Bruno, however, protested vehemently against his own election, and after fasting and praying for three days, declared himself unworthy of the honour done to him. His scruples finally overcome by the persuasion of the Emperor, he yielded and took upon himself the burden of the Pontificate, beginning at once to look about for suitable men who would help him in the great task he had undertaken.

Now it happened that at this time Hildebrand was in Worms, having been despatched there by the Abbot

of Cluny with an important message to the Emperor.[1] The ex-chaplain of Gregory VI. was known at least by name to Bishop Bruno, who forthwith summoned him to his presence, and offered him a place in his entourage if he would accompany him to Rome. 'I cannot,' replied Hildebrand. 'And why not?' questioned the new Pope. 'Because, without any canonical investiture and by the royal and secular power alone, you are going to take possession of the Roman Church.' This remark made such an impression on Bruno, that he announced before the Worms Council and the Roman deputies, that he would only accept the Pontificate if, upon arriving in Rome, the Roman clergy and people freely confirmed his election.

Finding his scruples satisfied, Hildebrand consented to accompany the Bishop and his suite to Rome. There seems to have been a strong bond of sympathy between this Pope-elect and the young prior of Cluny. Possibly in the long journey southwards, which lasted two months, they discussed those reforms, which Hildebrand so ardently desired, and which Bruno, should his election be confirmed, proposed to effect.

The Roman barons, people, and clergy welcomed Bruno heartily, his election was fully approved, and he took up his position without further hesitation, assuming the title of Leo IX.

Grateful for the advice given him by Hildebrand, the Pope conferred on him the post of cardinal sub-deacon of the Roman Church. In this capacity he took part in the administration of civic government, and the care

[1] According to Villemain; but Voigt, Giesebrecht, and others say that Leo, before departing for Rome, paid a visit to Toul and from thence to Cluny, and it was at the great Burgundian abbey that this memorable conversation took place.

of the Papal exchequer was also entrusted to him. He showed extraordinary ability in dealing with these mundane matters, and by making friends with some of the Jews of the Trasteverine quarter, two in particular, Benedict, a convert to Christianity, and his son Leo, he learnt many a valuable lesson of finance. This meagre little cardinal, undersized and of insignificant exterior, must soon have been well known in every part of Rome, and his influence widely felt. Now also his talent for making friends became manifest, for not only did he number many amongst the Trasteverines, but he managed to keep on good terms with the Roman nobility, and thus to strengthen Leo's position within the city walls. Yet, in the midst of all his activities over secular affairs, he never lost sight of the one great object of his life, the reform of the Church he loved so dearly. Many a great man was stirred by his influence to strenuous effort in this direction, and the reforms he so ardently desired were those that Leo IX., Victor II., Stephen X., and Alexander II., preceding him in the Pontificate, one and all attempted in the Church at large.

As we have already seen, Henry III. was in favour of Church reform, and so long as it did not encroach on his own political power, he was willing to give his support to the Church by his presence at councils, and even by his own exhortations. At Pavia (1046) and earlier still he had manifested the greatest indignation at the traffic in livings. A short while before the election of Gregory VI. he had thus expressed himself to the clergy at a Council[1] he had assembled, probably at Constance:

[1] An account of this synod is given by a contemporary writer, Rudolfus Glaber, a monk of Cluny, but he does not mention the year or place of assembly. Giesebrecht points out that it must have been held either prior

'You, who ought to spread blessings everywhere, you are losing yourselves in lust and avarice; be it in buying holy things, or in selling them, you are equally worthy of malediction. Even my father, for the peril of whose soul I suffer daily, gave himself over too much to this damnable vice. But in future he amongst you who sullies himself thus, shall be cut off from the service of God. For it is by these degraded practices that we draw down upon ourselves famine, pestilence, and war.'

In the first year of his Pontificate Leo IX. held four councils with the object of putting down simony: at Rome, Pavia, Rheims, and Mainz. The most important of these was at Rheims, where he examined especially the charges of simony brought against the bishops and clergy, and deposed and excommunicated many of them. The Archbishop of Galicia was excommunicated for arrogating to himself the title of 'apostolic,' which the Popes alone reserved exclusively for themselves. The sitting of the council was terminated by a declaration of the Church against many abuses both secular and ecclesiastical. It was forbidden that a man should be raised to the dignity of bishop without the election of clergy and people, that any should buy or sell Holy Orders, and that any lay person should usurp the functions of the priesthood. Priests were prohibited from demanding any fee for burial, baptism, or the visitation of the sick, to practise usury or to carry arms.

to, or in, 1045, as Rudolf's chronicle concludes with events happening in that year. See Giesebrecht, vol. ii. pp. 381-382. It would seem likely that the synod may have been held at Constance as Villemain says (vol. i. p. 288), since Rudolfus Glaber speaks especially of German and Burgundian bishops being present, and the city of Constance was not far from the Burgundian border. See Raoul Glaber, *Les Cinq Livres de son Histoire* (ed. Prou., Paris, 1886), lib. v. cap. v. Voigt (vol. i. p. 8) also gives Constance as the meeting-place for this synod.

Rapine, violence to the poor, incest, and bigamy were denounced in the strongest terms, and some great seigneurs were excommunicated for having committed these crimes.

At the Mainz Council, Henry with his court and a great number of nobles was present. Here simony and the marriage of priests were again rigorously forbidden.

On his return to Rome Leo, aided and sustained by Hildebrand, continued his work of reforming the Church. In spite of all the councils, the actual work of reform progressed but slowly. Leo IX. was not a strong enough man in himself, nor was the Papacy at that time in a position to enforce effectually the measures recommended. For a new menace to its power presented itself in the south of Italy, where an alien race had succeeded in establishing itself and was growing so formidable, that as ally or foe it had to be counted with, by Pope and Emperor alike. Very briefly indeed, we must see how this people affected the history of the peninsula, at the period with which we are concerned.

CHAPTER V

Rise of the Norman Power in the South of Italy—Character of the Norman adventurers who landed there in the early part of the eleventh century, and their conflicts with the various races already in possession—At first Leo IX. adopts a friendly attitude towards them, but soon changes, and determines to check their aggressions—Battle of Civitate and captivity of Leo—Embassy of Frederick of Lorraine to Constantinople—Robert Guiscard—Death of Leo IX. in 1054—Gerbhard of Eichstadt elected Pope as Victor II.—Henry III. fears the increasing power of Duke Godfrey and is suspicious of his brother Frederick—The latter retires to Monte Cassino—Death of Henry III.—Minority of Henry IV. and regency of the Empress Agnes—Death of Victor II., 1057—Stephen IX.—The Antipope Benedict X.—Appointment of Nicholas II. in place of the Antipope.

THE Eastern Empire which had once held complete sway in Sicily and the south of Italy had been ousted from Sicily by the Mussulmans, and almost entirely from its rule on the mainland by the Longobards. At the beginning of the eleventh century, however, the south of the peninsula was divided into a number of petty states, which may be described roughly as follows :—The territories once held by the Longobards in the extreme south, the provinces of Apulia and Calabria, had been reconquered, and were governed by catapans, representatives of the Eastern Emperor sent there from Constantinople to administer the affairs of state. Amalfi, Naples, and Gaëta on the coast from south to north formed for the time being

three small separate republics, while Salerno, Capua, and Beneventum were the respective capitals of Longobard principalities, governed by the last rulers of that once mighty race.

These principalities bordered on the north with the pontifical State and the Duchy of Spoleto, and this proximity to the Popes' possessions gave rise to many a dispute, and many a small fight. Byzantium still held nominal sway over the whole of this country, and in no way acknowledged the independence of the Longobard princes or the autonomy of the republics. It is true that the former were in a somewhat anomalous position; in theory they held their lands as fiefs of the Eastern Empire, yet occasionally they would do homage to the Western Emperors, when one of these appeared with an army in the south. The Duchy of Beneventum was often looked upon as a Western Imperial fief, and that the Papacy had some shadowy rights to lands in Calabria and the Duchy of Beneventum is shown by allusions to them in various documents. The Byzantine rulers were not in a position to protect effectually their South Italian possessions, and the paucity of their troops in occupation made rebellion amongst the inhabitants an easy matter, while it left the coasts open to Saracenic invaders, who now owning the entire islands of Sicily were ever ready to swoop down on the mainland for piratical purposes.

Such an attack took place in Salerno in 1016, and the inhabitants made an appeal to some Norman pilgrims who had landed by chance in Italy on their way home from Jerusalem. These latter, fired by their love of adventure, and filled with pious horror of the infidels, as true sons of the Church at once espoused the cause

of the Salernitans against their enemies, and succeeded in driving off the invaders. The Normans were rewarded with much gratitude, and costly gifts were pressed upon them. The presents they sternly refused, and continued their homeward journey. They were accompanied by envoys from the Salernitans to their country-folk at home, to beg that more warriors would come and take service with them against the infidel, and bearing with them spices, fruit, and precious mantles of silk, as proof of the riches of the land of the south, and of what was to be gained by serving its rulers. This embassy was not without effect, and from that time onward, hosts of Norman warriors made their way into the southern parts of Italy.

Here indeed was a great field for enterprising mercenaries, and the Normans were exactly the right people to take advantage of the existing state of affairs in this new land of adventure. Robust to an astonishing degree, valiant and undaunted by reverses, they possessed all the sturdier qualities of manhood which were lacking in these Southern people, for even the original Longobard strain was waxing feeble, and there was no force left to resist the steady onslaught of a more vigorous race. So taking advantage, now of this rebellion, now of that, amongst Longobards or Greeks, allying themselves occasionally with the East or West, later with the pontifical power itself, the Normans gained for themselves a foothold in the south and in Sicily, and their domination gradually spread over all those lands held by Greek, Lombard, and Saracen.

At first the Popes and the German Emperors were inclined to look with favour upon the Normans in the south of Italy, thinking that their rising power would

act as a counterbalance to that of Byzantium. The influence of the East was always dreaded at this time. In fact, an expedition taken by Henry II. in 1022, into the south, where the Byzantines were again gaining ground, had resulted in the submission of Salerno and Capua to the German overlordship, and in 1027 the Emperor Conrad appears to have conceded to the Normans the right to settle in the countries of the south of Italy, in order to fight the Greeks, and again in 1038 he is said to have settled disputes between the Normans and the local inhabitants. In 1047 Henry III. invested several Norman lords with the lands they had already conquered, and because Beneventum refused to receive him, he authorised the Normans to attack the city, and in a measure he encouraged these acts of aggression within the principality itself.

But some years later there ensued a revulsion of feeling; outcries against the Norman cruelties were heard on all sides, and came to the ears of the Pope Leo. 'From being welcomed as deliverers they soon became the oppressors,' and that petition from our ancient Litany, 'From the fury of the Northman, good Lord deliver us,' may have been voiced even in southern Italy.

These outrages, together with a wish to limit the power of this new people and to reserve to the Papacy its rights in the south, must have actuated Leo in the course he eventually took. At first he was merely desirous of maintaining order, forcing the Normans to restore to the Church those lands and properties they had pillaged. In a visit he paid to the south in 1049 he appears to have been partially successful in his undertakings, and acting in the name of the Emperor as well as in that of the Church, his actions were invested with a great measure of

authority and made an impression even on the Normans. In the year 1051, after having driven Landulf and Pandulf, its ruling princes, into exile, Beneventum offered to submit itself to the Pope, and in July of the same year Leo made his way to that city, and afterwards visited other towns in the south, for the purpose of restoring peace and order amongst Longobard princes, Norman warriors and vassals of the Emperor.

At first two of the Norman chiefs had gained his confidence, and they had rendered him help at Beneventum, but a tumult breaking out between the citizens and the Normans, aroused Leo's anger and suspicions (wrongly, as it was afterwards proved, for the outbreak had been instigated by the Greeks). From this time forth, however, Leo's attitude towards the Normans completely changed, and he resolved to try and expel them at least from Beneventan territory. He was supported in his views by his own immediate followers. The cardinals and the young chancellor of the Pope, Frederick of Lorraine, Leo's special protégé, evinced great hatred and contempt of the Normans; Frederick was wont to say that with a hundred warriors he would drive them out of Italy. Leo himself was not so sanguine, however, and employed more cautious measures to attain his end. During a visit to Germany in 1051-52, he exchanged his rights over the bishopric of Bamberg and the abbey of Fulda for Beneventum—and then tried to raise an army wherewith to attack the Normans. A motley crowd of Germans flocked to his standard, and in the south, Frederick the chancellor had managed to collect together a small army of Italian malcontents, and received also a certain amount of support from the lesser Italian lords—those who had suffered much at the hands of the Normans.

He even went so far as to negotiate with the Greeks to gain their help in this undertaking.

Near Civitate, in the valley of the Fortore, which marks the boundary between the Beneventan territory and Apulia, the Pope encamped with his army, and here the Normans met him. At first their commander tried pacific negotiations, for their own position was not a very secure one. Their chief ally, Guaimar, Prince of Salerno, had been assassinated shortly after the disturbance at Beneventum, and they knew the Greeks to be inimically disposed towards them: also they were sorely pressed for provisions. Moreover, they had started their career in Italy as defenders of the Church and wished to remain on good terms with its head. So they proposed to disband their troops if the Pope would only confirm them in their possessions as vassals of the Church, and release them from the ban under which he had placed them when his anger had been kindled at Beneventum. But these overtures were ill received by the Papal party, and a battle ensued. The Normans were entirely victorious, and the Pope in Civitate awaited the issue with dismay. But the victors acted generously. With a curious *volte-face*, more characteristic of southern than of northern blood, they assumed the humble position of the vanquished, craved pardon of Leo for what they had done, begged for absolution with every show of reverence, conducted the Pope to Beneventum, some twelve miles distant, and offered to escort him to Capua, when he should wish to return to Rome.[1] In spite of this generosity on the part of the conquerors, there is no

[1] The historian Chalandon has called in question this submission of the Normans and the mildness of the Pope (Chal., vol. i. p. 139-140). But Giesebrecht (vol. ii. p. 503) gives it full credence.

doubt that Leo was more or less forced to remain at Beneventum until some sort of an agreement had been made with the Normans, and it is to be presumed that the Pope consented to invest them with the lands they had conquered. Villemain (vol. i. p. 308) says further that the Pope paid a large sum of ransom money.

The Pope employed his time in Beneventum in studying the Greek language and in addressing various letters to East and West. To Constantinople he made the warmest overtures, expressing a desire that the two Churches might be reunited in the faith, and also his hopes that the Normans might yet be expelled from the peninsula ! An embassy headed by Frederick of Lorraine was despatched with this letter to Constantinople. The result of the battle of Civitate was a severe blow to the authority of the Papacy in the south, and a great help to the prestige of the Normans. In a measure they legitimised their position, and from henceforth they became a power to be reckoned with in the internecine politics of Italy.

The commanders at this memorable battle had been Richard, Count of Aversa,[1] and the two brothers, Humphrey and Robert Guiscard. These two young warriors were the sons of the Sieur de Hauteville, a poor Norman seigneur whose patrimony was not ample enough for the needs of his numerous family, so that one member after another had left home and made their way to other lands. Their history can be read elsewhere. The one who most concerns us here is Robert Guiscard, who had arrived in Italy some six

[1] This countship of Aversa had been founded in 1030 by a Norman knight, Rainulf. It was the first territory acquired by the Normans in Italy. Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 332.

years before the battle of Civitate and, already making his name famous in warfare, was destined to become the most celebrated of his numerous brethren.

Starting in such poverty that he knew not where to turn for subsistence, he pushed his way upwards; often unscrupulous in his methods, ready to avail himself of every opportunity for advancement, and gathering round him a crowd of adventurers, he took service under one ruler after another as it suited his ends, and succeeded in winning for himself fame, riches, and territory beyond all dreams. He was treated as of royal birth, and his children were sought in marriage by many a princely house of East and West. Undaunted by mischance—on the contrary, spurred on by it to more vigorous efforts, he was in truth a splendid fighter, a great man and brave, with flashing blue eyes, clear-cut features, ruddy complexion, and of a height that towered head and shoulders above his hosts of armed warriors. Yet it was not only on account of his military talents that Guiscard shone supreme amongst his compatriots. Well did he deserve his nickname Guiscard (Wiscard, *i.e.* Wizzard, or Wiseacre). His powers of organising the government of his states, his extraordinary political abilities, which enabled him to look beyond the issue of the moment, made him in many respects the equal of Gregory VII. Although at first Guiscard and Gregory were at issue, a strong feeling of friendship grew up between them, and even if the former's allegiance to the Papacy were not undivided, there is no doubt that it was to his better nature that the exiled Pope appealed, when finally the grim old warrior offered him a refuge in Salerno.

At times the Normans proved a thorn in the side of

the Papacy, at other times a staunch support to its weakness. Though they counted themselves faithful sons of Holy Church, and were pious, as warriors went in those days, they were too easily swayed by the love of gain to be reckoned upon as allies with any degree of security, and it was only when there was hope of plunder, or promise of rich reward, that their help was to be obtained as a certainty.

At one moment, when all the rest of the powerful lords in Italy had abandoned his cause, Gregory VII. stood with Matilda and Guiscard as his only two supporters—yet Guiscard did not stay the sack of Rome, and was too full of ambitious plans of empire to employ his whole might in defence of the Church. But in spite of all the drawbacks to the Normans as allies, it is undeniable that their power was a great factor in the development of the Papal supremacy, and a restraining influence on the might of the German emperors.

Leo IX. lived only one month after his return from captivity. He expired in Rome in April 1054, deeply regretted by the Roman people, who regarded him as a saint.[1] He had won the hearts of all men by his broad human sympathies, and even in enforcing canonical laws and denouncing the vices of the day he never failed to show love and pity towards the individual offender, whilst many an act of mercy tempered his sternest judgments. He was sincerely mourned by Hildebrand, and years afterwards, when the latter was Pope, he was in the habit of speaking of Leo IX. with the greatest reverence and affection, and enjoined upon the bishops not to let sink in oblivion the precious memories they retained of him, but to commit them to writing: 'the which,'

[1] See Giesebrecht, vol. ii. pp. 465-466.

remarks Villemain,[1] ' he would no doubt have undertaken himself, had he not been more fully engaged in surpassing him than in depicting him ' !

Many months elapsed before a worthy successor to Leo could be found, and it was owing to Hildebrand's representations that the Emperor was prevailed upon to nominate Gerbhard, Bishop of Eichstadt, to the Holy See.

Hildebrand had been sent to Germany at the head of an embassy to consult the Emperor upon this important question, and it required considerable diplomacy to secure the man most fitted, in his opinion, to become the supreme head of the Church. Henry was loth to part with his favourite bishop, a man of great astuteness, devoted to the Emperor, and enjoying his entire confidence, yet in nowise likely to forget his duties and position as a churchman. Gerbhard himself was not anxious to become Pope, refused the honour with great insistence, and even went so far as to send special messengers to Rome to try and prejudice the Romans against his election.[2] But at length Henry was induced to add his entreaties to those of Hildebrand, whereupon Gerbhard yielded, stipulating, however, that his election should be ratified by the Roman people ; and in the following year this was accomplished, and he was welcomed in Rome as Pope Victor II. In all ways the new Pope confirmed Hildebrand's expectations. He identified himself at once with things Italian, and, whilst zealously devoting his life to the work of reforming the Church upon the principles laid down by his predecessors, he still continued a staunch friend and supporter of the Emperor.

It was shortly after Victor's accession to the Pontifi-

[1] Villemain, vol. i. p. 314. [2] Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 511.

cate that Henry III. paid that memorable visit to Italy, to try and reduce the power of Godfrey of Lorraine, as we have already seen in Chapter III. (1055). The Emperor regarded Godfrey's plots as very far-reaching indeed, and his suspicions at this time included even Godfrey's brother, Cardinal Frederick. The latter, upon his return from the East after the death of Leo IX., had retained his appointment as chancellor (at all events till 1055), but now the Emperor seems to have suspected him of greater power than he possessed. Tales of the treasures the legates had brought back with them were freely circulated, while Henry imagined Frederick would be able to further his brother's cause by means of the relations he had established with Constantinople. These fears were groundless, however, for although the embassy had been well received at the Eastern court, and loaded with presents by the Emperor, a rebellion had broken out immediately after its departure, and the Patriarch of Constantinople had pronounced his ban on the legates, even as they had previously excommunicated him. The result was a complete rupture between the two Churches of East and West, and although Frederick and his companions had safely landed in Italy with their treasures, they were shamefully robbed by a certain Count Thrasimund of Teano on their way to Rome, and, naturally enough, for the time being all negotiations with Byzantium were at an end.

Henry, unmindful of these occurrences, wrote to the Pope, commanding him to secure the person of this dangerous cardinal and have him conveyed to Germany. Frederick, however, was warned in time to protect himself.[1] Taking refuge at Monte Cassino, he divested him-

[1] Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 516.

self of his ecclesiastical robes, and donned the habit of a monk. Fearing still that the enmity of the Emperor would pursue him, he begged the abbot's permission to retire to the island monastery of Tremiti in the Adriatic, a dependency of Monte Cassino, and there he abode for some months till the hue and cry was over, when he returned once more to Monte Cassino.[1]

Henry's great trust in Pope Victor was evinced in a very marked manner. No latent jealousy of Papal encroachments seems to have possessed the Emperor's mind. On the contrary, he gave back into Victor's hands the rights over many bishoprics and towns, formerly wrested from the Papacy, invested him with the Dukedom of Spoleto and the March of Camerino, and created him Vicar Imperial in Italy. In his attitude towards the Church Henry seems to have been entirely actuated by a desire for her reform, and a wish to establish a state of lasting concord between the two great powers of Christendom. When, at the moment of the Church's degradation, he had been appealed to for help, he had used the authority given him, wisely and well, and had placed the very ablest man he could find in St. Peter's

[1] The famous abbey of Monte Cassino, erected to commemorate the burial-place of St. Benedict, is situated on a high hill midway between Rome and Naples. During the Middle Ages it was renowned for its enormous library of precious manuscripts, for its treasures of gold and silver, and for the learning and science of the brethren. The monks displayed the greatest activity in collecting and transcribing MSS., and the library contained a greater number of profane writings than was to be found elsewhere. Two of its historians are still famous—Amatus and Leo Ostensis. At a very early period the science of medicine was largely cultivated in the monastery. Its abbots were most carefully chosen, and many of them became subsequently Popes, two of whom concern this period—Stephen IX. and Victor III. Monte Cassino was the Mecca not only of the Southern Lombards, but also of the rude Normans. 'They robbed, but they fervently reverenced St. Benedict, and singing psalms they went on pilgrimages to his grave.' —Gregorovius, vol. iv. pp. 163-164.

chair. And at the end of his career, in the appointment of Victor II. he had deprived himself of a proved and trusty counsellor for the greater good of the Church. Relying entirely on this his friend's integrity, he endowed him with powers such as had never before been granted by individual Emperor to individual Pope.

Had Henry been spared yet longer to rule his realm, the history of Europe might have been differently written, and it is possible that Papacy and Empire would never have arrived at that extreme point of deadly rivalry they were destined to reach in later years. When we think of the long weary struggle for supremacy, upon which these two were shortly to embark, of the anarchy, the strife, and the agonies endured by Italy, it is pleasant to linger a moment over this page of history, to pay a passing tribute to the memory of a truly great ruler. With Hildebrand as Pope, and Henry III. as Emperor, what might not Christendom have achieved? But henceforth no peace—a sword, rather—was to be her portion, and many a long year of bitterness was in store.

It was not without great anxiety for the safety of his realm that Henry III. passed away (October 1056). He had declared his forgiveness of all his enemies, and made peace with many a rebellious vassal, and in his last moments, in the presence of the Pope (then visiting Germany) and the great lords spiritual and temporal, who had gathered round him, he had caused his little son to be again acknowledged as his successor,[1] and commended the Empress to the special care of the Pope.

The dying Emperor's fears were not groundless, for

[1] Already in his cradle Henry had been recognised as his father's successor Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 474.

who could imagine that the princes of the realm, held in check by a stronger man than themselves, would remain contented under the government of a weak woman and a child ?

Of Agnes of Poitiers (daughter of that William of Aquitaine to whom the crown of Italy had once been offered) history would have heard but little, had she died the consort of an emperor. Beautiful, well educated for the period, truly charitable and well intentioned, she possessed on the whole those negative qualities which would fit any woman for a secondary position in a great realm ; but as Empress-regent a task was given her far beyond her powers, and her career was deplorable. With no strength of character or discernment, she was the ready dupe of any ambitious ecclesiastic, who could easily obtain influence over her by making some show of piety. Intrigues arose on all sides and throve the more lustily as the Empress's incapacity to grapple with the situation, and rightly administer the affairs of that enormous kingdom, became more marked. Such a woman was not qualified to train a son to become a worthy ruler, and can we wonder that in the midst of an atmosphere of intrigue, jealousy, and lying on the one hand, and of weakness of purpose, caprice, and want of judgment on the other, a child should grow up into such a man as Henry IV. ?

For the moment, however, there was quiet in the land ; the princes, who had been greatly mollified by the Emperor's last acts, were stunned at the news of his death, for he was still a man in the prime of life, and they rallied round the young King and his widowed mother in a more conciliatory way than was their wont. Pope Victor lent the Empress his advice and support,

and was the means of adjusting all the outstanding grievances of Godfrey of Lorraine and Baldwin of Flanders, as we have already seen. After spending Christmas with the Empress and little King at Regensburg, the Pope attended another Council of State to assist the Empress in her dealings with the remaining princes of the realm.

Church affairs, however, recalled the Pope to Italy, and journeying back with Godfrey and his wife, he waited awhile in Tuscany, arriving in Florence some time in the spring of the year 1057. He kept Easter in Rome, and then returned to Florence to visit Godfrey. Here he was met by Frederick of Lorraine, by this time abbot of Monte Cassino, and Victor raised him to further honour by creating him Cardinal Priest of St. Chrysogonus in Rome. Special privileges were also conceded to Monte Cassino; its abbots were allowed the use of dalmatics and sandals on feast days, and the highest place amongst abbots at every assembly. A limit was set to Victor's activities, however, for in the course of the summer he was seized with fever at Arezzo, and died there on the 28th of July (1057).

With the passing of Victor II. and Henry III. the history of the Papacy enters on a new phase. We have seen how Henry III. had on the whole worked for the Church's welfare, and how zealously he had participated in the work of her reform, so that for the time being, there had been less question of her freeing herself entirely from all submission to temporal power. But the idea was still latent, and as the authority of the Empire weakened during the long minority of Henry IV., and submission to such a faithless Emperor as Henry IV. proved himself to be grew more and more repugnant, whilst the Church

strengthened her position in the process of reform, the idea of an entire separation could not but receive fresh stimulus, and the emancipation of the Church from temporal authority grew to be an absolute necessity, in the minds of such men as Gregory VII. The political circumstances were indeed favourable to the furtherance of this idea. Germany was as a house divided against itself, and it was doubtful if it would ever again be in a position to assert the authority it had once exercised over the Papacy.

Very rapidly after Victor's death a new Pope was elected and crowned in Rome. Without consultation with the German court, without, as far as is known, the approval of Hildebrand, Frederick of Lorraine was raised to the Pontifical See as Stephen IX. The Romans doubtless wished to conciliate Godfrey, now one of the most powerful rulers in Italy, and at the same time to gain for themselves an ally against the dreaded Normans, since Frederick's hatred of that people was well known. Stephen's reign, however, was a short one, but he employed it to the utmost for the furtherance of those plans which he had at heart. Two most important appointments for the future of Italy were made by him. He transported Peter Damian, already a man of note, from his hermitage, and created him Bishop of Ostia, and he gave the bishopric of Lucca to Anselm of Milan.[1] He also granted fresh privileges to the abbey of Cluny, and provided another abbot for Monte Cassino, in the person of Desiderius, a young man full of promise. He despatched Hildebrand to Germany to try and justify his election to the Empress Agnes, since she, acting as regent for her son, had still a right to be consulted.

[1] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 22.

Hildebrand's diplomatic talents must have been taxed to the utmost, and at first he was but ill received, for the Empress was very dissatisfied with the appointment of the new Pope, and mistrusted him and his family as well as Hildebrand. At length, however, the task was accomplished, and Hildebrand returned to Italy with full credentials for the new Pontiff. Yet this had been, doubtless, a most unwelcome mission for him; it is not very probable that he approved of Stephen's accession, knowing, as he did, the latter's attitude towards the Normans.

In deadly earnest the new Pope set to work to rid Italy of these settlers in the south. The treasures of which he had been robbed by Count Thrasimund had been restored, and handed over to Monte Cassino, and these he now demanded of the abbot, in order to spend the money in raising an army. He also prepared an embassy to start for Constantinople to appeal for help from the Eastern Emperor.

After Victor II.'s death Godfrey had seized upon the territories of Camerino and Spoleto, handed over to Victor by Henry III., and no opposition had been offered to these proceedings, though the Roman nobility were beginning to look upon him with a jealous eye. There was a report current at this time that Pope Stephen intended to offer the crown of Empire to his brother Godfrey, and so to break entirely with the German royal house. Italy would have been willing enough to throw off its allegiance to Germany, but whether it would have accepted the adopted Tuscan as its liege lord is open to question. Also if Stephen had intended to make headway against the Normans,[1] he could hardly have risked incurring the

[1] See here Wattendorf.

enmity of the German court; and however powerful the Tuscan house had become, it would not have been able to fight North and South at one and the same time. We mention this story in passing as it is given full credence by many historians, and it is also referred to by a contemporary writer.[1]

In the meantime, the Pope, anxious to see his brother Godfrey, decided to journey to Tuscany, but before starting he evidently had some premonition of his approaching end, for he assembled the Roman nobles, bishops, and priests, and adjured them most solemnly not to appoint his successor until Hildebrand's return, should he himself die while absent from Rome.

Whatever Pope Stephen's plans for Italy may have been, they were brought to an untimely end. He set out for Florence, and on his way he visited the lately founded abbey of Vallombrosa, where he was seized with mortal illness, and passed away in the arms of the saintly abbot, Giovanni Gualberto (March, 1058), again admonishing the clergy, almost with his last breath, to wait for Hildebrand before nominating a new Pope. However, the Roman nobles immediately elected a creature of their own, Benedict X. He reigned in Rome for a few months, when Hildebrand returning from Germany, and halting in Florence, wrote a most indignant letter to the cardinals, censuring them strongly for not having obeyed the injunctions of Pope Stephen, and awaited his, Hildebrand's, return.

A great assembly of bishops was convened in Florence forthwith, and the then Bishop of Florence, Gerhard of

[1] Leo Ostensis' *Chron.*, lib. II. cap. 99, mentions the report that spread abroad at this time. See also Chalandon, vol. i. p. 165. Giesebrecht says, however, the report is hardly to be credited (vol. iii. p. 21).

Burgundy as he was called, was elected Pope. 'He (Hildebrand) set up a legitimate Pope against a false one, an apostolic Pope against Antipope, with the good grace also of Duke Godfrey,' writes one of Hildebrand's warm admirers.[1] Godfrey was, in fact, pressed to uphold this election, and assembled troops to support the new Pope. Moreover, Hildebrand, still anxious at this time to legitimise the Pope's election according to custom previously laid down,[2] was the means of having an embassy despatched to the Imperial court to have Gerhard's election confirmed. It is probable that Gerhard himself had accompanied it, and his nomination was thus confirmed by the Emperor without any difficulty. Benedict, unable to face all the power directed against him by the archdeacon,[3] was forced to abdicate after a council held in Sutri in January 1059, and his rival entered Rome in triumph, accompanied by Hildebrand, Godfrey, Beatrice, and Matilda, early in the year 1059. Bishop Gerhard was promptly hailed as Pope by the Romans under the name of Nicholas II.[4]

[1] Ved., vol. ii. p. 2. [2] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 25.

[3] Chalandon, vol. i. p. 166; Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 25. Bonitho (*Liber ad Amicum*, p. 640) refers to Hildebrand as 'the archdeacon' already in the year 1057. Voigt says, 'Hildebrand—who had recently been made archdeacon of the Roman Church'—in 1059 (vol. i. p. 73).

[4] 'The Romans, as easily moved as are leaves, and ready to make Popes or Antipopes according to the caprice of the moment'—'I Romani volubili più delle frondi, e pronti indifferentemente a far Papi ed Antipapi, secondo il lor capriccio.' Thus does Vedriani describe the Roman people at this time (Ved., vol. ii. p. 20).

CHAPTER VI

Matilda's early upbringing—Her training under Arduino della Palude —Her mother's part in her education—Her appearance—The portraits of her extant.

IT will be readily understood how the events just narrated, how in fact all the circumstances of Matilda's early years, would help to mould her character in one direction and serve to develop her inherited tendencies. From a very early age she must have heard of her father's devotion to the Emperor, and how ill he had been rewarded. Then her mother's captivity and enforced absence in Germany, while she herself had to be carefully guarded lest the Emperor should attempt to lay hands on her, must have made a deep impression on her childish mind. Added to this the deep piety of Beatrice, the cordial relations entertained by so many Popes with the Tuscan princely house, the fact that one amongst them was her step-father's brother, that his, Pope Stephen's, successors always found a warm welcome in Florence, and that during the whole of her youth the real seat of the Papacy may be said to have been in Florence rather than in Rome,—all these would have proved powerful factors in the building up of the ardent religious character, of that firm ally of Holy Church, who was later to become ' the wonder of Italy.'

Yet the daughter of Boniface could not but have some masculine traits of character. At an early age

BEATRICE

FROM THE MS. OF DOMNIZO

she was eager to learn knightly accomplishments. 'Disdaining with a virile spirit the art of Arachne, she seized the spear of Pallas,' remarks Vedriani,[1] Under the able tuition of Arduino della Palude, who afterwards became the general of her army, she learnt how to ride like a lancer, spear in hand, to bear a pike as a foot-soldier, and how to wield both battle-axe and sword.

As she grew up, tall and slender, yet agile and strong, she accustomed herself to wear a cuirass of steel. Vedriani, the Modenese historian, tells us that two suits of her armour were kept until his days in an armoury of one of the Quattro Castelli,[2] and in the year 1622 were sold *a vil prezzo* in the market-place of Reggio! Would that the fate of these could be traced!

Of Beatrice's part in her daughter's education, let Domnizo speak:[3]

'Who could relate with what prudence Beatrice maintained herself in honour for the whole of the thirty years that she lived after the death of her husband Boniface! Cities, castles, the marches, her own lands she held and governed uprightly.

'From early childhood she educated in a beautiful manner her daughter Matilda, who had an elevated and temperate mind; together with her she built two monasteries, so that He who holds the reins of Heaven might protect her!'

'The people, as well as I, know well,' he says further

[1] Vedriani, vol. ii. p. 19.

[2] The 'Quattro Castelli' (Montezane, Montelucio, Bianello, and Montevetro) are four castles built by Matilda on four hills, and stand like sentinels guarding one of the ancient approaches to Canossa. At the foot of Bianello or Bibbianello, as it used to be called, is a small hamlet called to-day Quattro Castellà. This castle has been lately restored, and is now inhabited.

[3] Dom., lib. i. cap. xvii.

in speaking of Matilda, 'that whatever I may say of so great a lady is nothing compared to what she merits; nevertheless it is fitting that they should learn to admire her better.

'She shines as brightly as does the star Diana.

'She is upheld, irradiated, and wonderfully sustained by hope,—therefore greater joys are reserved for her.

'She loves much the Divine Word by whom all things are created.

'She delights and praises those servants of hers whom she finds full of humility, and they honour and obey her with reverence.

'Prosperity does not alter her, nor do misfortunes disturb her.

'Prudence accompanies her every action, and the fame of her name is spread far over every kingdom.'

Later on, he tells us of his beloved mistress's appearance and accomplishments: 'She has always a cheerful, smiling countenance and a calm, peaceful mind. . . . She knows well the Teuton tongue, and speaks besides the beautiful language of the Franks.'[1]

Another writer tells us that she was in the habit of riding gaily at the head of her troops, surrounded by a goodly band of noble knights, that as she had accustomed herself since early girlhood to feats of arms, she seemed almost to disdain womanly accomplishments in times of peace, and her favourite form of amusement was the chase.

We are also told that she wrote Latin like the clerks, that she was most prudent and sagacious in the council chamber, that she ruled her people with firmness and

[1] Dom., Int. to lib. II.

with loving-kindness. So that if Arachne's accomplishments were despised, Pallas Athene dowered her doubly with bravery and with wisdom.

Gracious and kindly as she was to the lowly and the distressed, she never forgot that honour and homage were due to her as sovereign lady. No man amongst her vassals, were he prince, marquis, count, or knight, dared enter her presence without bending the knee in obeisance.[1] This was her due in the sight of man—far otherwise did she regard herself in the sight of her Maker. 'Matilda, by the grace of God, if she is anything.' Thus runs her favourite form of signature, and maybe here we have the very keynote to her character.

Matilda took great delight in the so-called liberal arts, encouraging in every way the spread of learning, and at a later period of her life collected at Canossa vast quantities of manuscripts. Of the monasteries and hospitals she built, of the baths that she had constructed, and the strong bridges over otherwise unfordable rivers, there is no end to the tale. Up and down Tuscany one may find the written records of these, hidden away in the archives of many a city. It is a thousand pities that the memory of all she accomplished for the good of her own people should be buried thus, and the story of her brave and long-enduring struggles for the Church which she loved so truly and so nobly should only reach us as a faint echo down the intervening centuries between her days and our own.

Remarkable as was her beauty at a very early age, there exists unfortunately no authentic portrait to do

[1] 'Omnes Principes, Marchiones, Comites, Proceres ceteros, omnesque Milites tanta diligentia gubernabat, quòd genu flexo in consiliis ante illam avidissimé se prosternebant.'—From a MS. in the Estense Library, Modena, published by Muratori, *Rer. It. Script.*, vol. vi.

it justice. In her time, pictorial art was in its extreme infancy, as may be seen from the miniatures illustrating Domnizo's poem, in the Vatican MS.[1]

There are, however, three most interesting portraits of Matilda of a later date. The first of these is now in the sacristy of the Cathedral at Mantua. The second was discovered in the Church of the Holy Trinity at Verona about the year 1864, when some experiments were being made in removing frescoes from the walls, and this portrait was discovered beneath a more modern painting. It is supposed to be the work of some Greek artist, and was possibly executed about the beginning of the thirteenth century. The Church of the Holy Trinity was built in the year 1073; in that year Matilda and her mother were both in Verona, and made a donation to the Abbey of San Zeno,[2] that ancient and famous abbey, so often the temporary resting-place of foreign emperors and kings. It is possible, therefore, that a fresco portrait of Matilda may have been painted in that very year, and that the one so lately brought to light is a copy from an earlier and original work. This Verona portrait is now in the possession of the Marchese Lodovico di Canossa, and is preserved in his palace at Verona itself. Professor Ferretti of Reggio possesses the third, which was discovered at the Castle of Rossena, within a short distance of Canossa.

Professor Ferretti in his monograph on 'Canossa'

[1] One of the portraits in this MS. representing Matilda seated on a kind of throne with a man-at-arms on one side of her, and on the other a monk (presumably Domnizo) who holds a book in his hand, is evidently the original of the one printed as a frontispiece to some of the editions of Fiorentini's *Life of Matilda*, and is also given in an edition printed in the year 1609 of Mellini's treatise on the Great Countess.

[2] See Appendix B.

MATILDA

FROM THE MS. OF DOMNIZO

mentions two fresco paintings, which are supposed to be portraits of Matilda—one in the Castle of Nozzano, near Lucca, the other in the ancient fortress of Bianello.[1] These two he characterises as rough and coarse. There are one or two other portraits to be found, differing greatly from the Vatican MS. type. One in Sardi's *Storie Ferrarese* and one in *Matilda*, by Dal Pozzo, but from what source they are derived, or of their authenticity, it is difficult to judge. Attached to a document belonging to the archives of Monte Cassino there is said to be a seal, impressed on which is a portrait of Matilda and her husband Godfrey.[2] Domnizo says of her mother, 'The beautiful Beatrice was of royal race, of the race of the masters of the world,' and he tells us further that Matilda was tall, with the beautiful features of her mother, while she had inherited her father's southern complexion.

Even as a small child what travellings to and fro she must have had! Backwards and forwards to Lucca and Canossa in the very early days with father and mother, and these journeys to and from Canossa can have been no easy matter, since for many months in the year the elements combine to make the fortress well-nigh inaccessible. The struggle for life in these regions is still a fierce one, and tends to raise a hardy race of people even to-day. This mountain home of Matilda and its inaccessibility must have served also to develop the hardier traits in her character. Later, under her step-father's escort,

[1] A copy of the Bianello fresco is now hung in the small museum at the summit of Canossa.

[2] Don Tosti's *Storia della Badia di Monte Cassino*, vol. i. p. 427, contains a reproduction of this impression. The workmanship of the original seal must have been extremely rough and coarse, and the 'portraiture' is disappointing.

she doubtless visited some of the towns over which she held sway—Mantua, Pisa, Reggio, and Modena. Then on her mother's return from Germany much time was spent in Florence; and at the age of fifteen came the great journey to Rome, when Godfrey and Beatrice were called upon to uphold Nicholas.

One wonders when was the first time that Hildebrand beheld the young Tuscan princess. Possibly in Florence, in the year that Nicholas II. was elected Pope, and she, a keen young girl, was hearing details of the councils, and eagerly preparing for that first warlike journey. The archdeacon may have travelled southward with the Tuscan princes. It is possible that Matilda, with her step-father and her mother, was present at the Council of Sutri in January 1059, which was held for the purpose of deposing Benedict X.

Peace being temporarily restored, the Tuscan princes left the neighbourhood of Rome and returned home. But the peace was of short duration. Matilda's childhood was at an end, and the stern, warlike career was about to begin in real earnest.

CHAPTER VII

Lateran Council held by Nicholas II., 1059—Alliance with the Normans—Hildebrand as Archdeacon and Abbot of St. Paul's—The Pataria at Milan—Death of Nicholas, 1061, in Rome—Anselm, Bishop of Lucca, is elected Pope as Alexander II.—Lombard Prelates cause Cadalous of Parma to be elected Pope with the approval of the Empress Agnes—These rival Popes are the means of producing a widespread schism in the Church: it is agreed to refer the whole question of the schism to a Council—The Council held at Mantua in 1064, when Alexander is unanimously declared the lawful successor to Peter—Cadalous and his friend Guibert retire to Parma, to conspire once more against the Pope.

NICHOLAS II. pursued the same policy as his immediate predecessor. Guided by Hildebrand, he waged war against simony and the immoralities of the priesthood, and steadily endeavoured to reduce the imperial power with regard to ecclesiastical investitures, especially in the matter of the election of the Pope. Hildebrand's recent visit to Germany must have shown him how useless it would be in the immediate future to look for any help from that quarter, with regard to the work of reforming the Church. There were many forces then at work in Italy, all tending towards the disintegration of the imperial power. In the north the extreme ill-will manifested to the German bishops placed there by Henry III.—the great princes, cool towards imperial interests, engaged rather in furthering ambitious plans for their own aggrandisement, now

that there was no restraining hand upon them—in the south the ever-increasing power of the Normans—the thought of all these must have convinced him, that if the Church were to persevere in her task of self-reform there was no other course open to her but to create for herself an absolutely independent position. The immediate result of this line of policy was shown in the two most important acts of Nicholas's reign—the decree passed at the Lateran Council of 1059, and the alliance of the Papacy with the Normans.

The following is an extract from that decree :—' We decree and appoint that, on the death of the present Pontiff of the universal Roman Church, the cardinals shall in the first place proceed to a new election, regard being had to the honour and reverence due to our dearly loved son Henry, who is now styled King, and who it is hoped will hereafter, by the grace of God, become Emperor.' So that the Emperor's power of vetoing the election of the cardinals was reduced to a mere shadow.

It may be remarked in passing that amongst this great assembly, comprising as it did all the bishops and archbishops of Italy (with the exception of the Archbishop of Ravenna), and an innumerable host of lesser clergy, only a few French and Burgundian bishops were present, and not a single high dignitary from Germany.[1] It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the decision of the Council met with great opposition on the other side of the Alps, and that shortly after, a legate sent by Nicholas to the German court was refused an audience.

Now was a fitting moment to treat with the Normans,[2] since the Papacy stood in great need of a powerful ally to support the position it was establishing for itself.

[1] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. pp. 42, 43. [2] Chalandon, vol. i. p. 213.

Duke Godfrey's army had retired from Rome after installing Nicholas, and since some of the Roman barons were still indignant at Benedict's deposition, Nicholas needed troops to uphold him. Hildebrand therefore made advances to Richard of Aversa, Guiscard's brother-in-law,[1] through the intervention, it is believed, of Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino. Richard had lately conquered the domains of Capua, and had been on friendly terms with Desiderius, when the latter was prior of St. Benedict's at Capua. This Norman, Chalandon tells us, had acted less as a brigand than any of his compatriots; he had respected the Church's lands. He willingly undertook to subdue the rebellious Roman lords and succeeded. A chronicler[2] of these times says that soon after Richard's expedition, the Normans begged the Pope to visit Apulia so that they might reconcile themselves with the Church. Nicholas therefore left Rome, and in the summer of 1059 held a synod at Melfi in Apulia. Ecclesiastical questions were first dealt with, and then the Pope received the oath of fidelity from Robert Guiscard, and solemnly invested him with the Duchy of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, while Richard was given Capua as a fief. Robert swore to protect and respect the domains of St. Peter and to uphold and help the Pope in occupying the Papal See, and to further any future pontifical election provided it was carried out with all the honour due to St. Peter, and according to what had already been laid down by the cardinals and the Romans, lay and clerical. Thus a bond of union was established for the time being with these mighty warriors, and the Holy See gained powerful allies capable of protecting it against the turbulent Roman nobles, and possibly against Germany,

[1] Chalandon, vol. i. p. 168. [2] See Chalandon, vol. i. p. 169.

while the Normans[1] gained a very definite right to the lands of the south of Italy and to Sicily, although the greater part of that island was still to be conquered.

In the autumn of 1059 the Pope returned to Florence, to administer the affairs of that bishopric, which he had retained in his own hand. Here he lived in close intercourse with Duke Godfrey and his family, only returning to Rome to celebrate Easter, or to hold there the great ecclesiastical synods. All other matters were dealt with by Hildebrand, who showed himself as eager to serve the Church in her economic difficulties as he was with the greater questions of reform. Since the days of the three rival Popes (1044) the Papal exchequer had been reduced to a very low state, and Hildebrand, by making friends with various of the Jewish inhabitants of the Trasteverine quarter of Rome, as we have already seen, had learnt how to deal with the Papal treasury to advantage. About this time he was made abbot of St. Paul's ' without the walls,' an abbey renowned alike for its riches and for its strict obedience to monastic discipline.

Hildebrand at this time certainly learnt how to become all things to all men ; severe within the precincts of his own abbey, he yet assumed a certain splendour of dress, and this, together with the retinue he maintained, drew down upon him the reproofs of his more ascetic friend, Peter Damian. The Bishop of Ostia was unhappy in his bishopric, and had wished to resume his hermit life at Avellana ; but Hildebrand would not hear of this. He saw very clearly that Peter's abilities were still needed for the Church militant, so in spite of many a letter of

[1] Henceforward the Norman chiefs called themselves Princes and Dukes ' by the grace of God and St. Peter.'—Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 50.

remonstrance Peter was bidden to remain at his post by the man whom he called 'his holy Satan.' Peter Damian's services were shortly afterwards called upon for a most important mission, and he was despatched to Milan to re-establish Papal authority within its walls.

The Church of Milan, retaining as it did the rule of St. Ambrose, had long withstood the supremacy of Rome. But for the fact that the feeling against Rome as Rome was so strong, the political rupture with Germany would in Lombardy have been more complete, for at the time of Henry III.'s death the bishops he had placed there found their position almost untenable, and in Pavia, a bishop appointed by the Empress Agnes had to give place to one chosen by the people themselves, while the same thing would have happened in Asti but for the intervention of the Marchioness Adelaide. The Lombard bishops, wealthy beyond all others, with hosts of vassals at their command, were amongst the most schismatic of Italy—not only did they purchase their sees, but the higher nobles were their greatest friends, and willingly married the bishops' daughters. In the midst of all this schism there grew up a strong reactionary party headed by Anselm of Baggio, Bishop of Lucca. He was Milanese by birth, and had been educated at the Norman abbey of Bec under Lanfranc, and there he had imbibed many ideas for reforming the Church. At first, as a young cleric he had been well received in Milan, but he preached so strongly against simony and the marriage of the priests, that he became very unpopular, and for a time he retired to Germany, where he acted as chaplain to Henry III. In 1056 he was appointed to the vacant See of Lucca, and this preferment brought him into relationship with Godfrey, Beatrice, and later, with Cardinal Hildebrand.

His preaching in Milan had not been in vain. In 1056 a deacon called Ariald declaimed boldly against the marriage of priests, declared that ordination should be made without fees, and spoke in favour of the supremacy of Rome. His sermons made a deep impression; he was soon joined by others, a young cleric named Landulf in particular, but among their partisans were numbered the most unruly of the town, and these proceeded to very violent measures. As the rabble joined them more and more, they earned for themselves the name of Patarines or rag bags, from a Milanese word signifying 'rags.' First given them in derision, they themselves adopted this name with delight, since to the fanatics amongst them it seemed to indicate the poverty of Christ that they were trying to imitate. This movement gradually spread to the other towns of Lombardy, and though ostensibly ecclesiastical, the Pataria was also a political movement in some sense, for it tended to the diminishing of German influence. Matters had reached a severe crisis between the people and Archbishop Wido of Milan, when Peter Damian and Anselm of Lucca were despatched to settle their disputes.

After narrowly escaping with his life, so unruly were the Milanese, Peter Damian managed to quell the strife and proclaimed the supremacy of Rome. He commanded the presence of the archbishop and suffragan bishops of Asti, Alba, Vercelli, Novara, Lodi and Brescia at a council in Rome, where they appeared and promised full submission to the Pope, whereupon Nicholas reinvested Wido (who had temporarily been deprived of his bishopric by Peter Damian) by presenting him with the episcopal ring. That these Lombard bishops, formerly such devoted adherents of the Empire, should bow themselves before

the authority of Rome, was a great step in advance for the Papal power ; even if this submission were but short-lived, it showed at least how weak had grown the once mighty influence of Germany in the ' Paradise ' of Italy.

When on the death of Nicholas in 1061 Anselm, the good Bishop of Lucca (' a person eminent in doctrine, with great experience in worldly affairs '), was elected Pope, by cardinals, bishops, and clergy, and in accordance with the decree of the late Pontiff, quoted above, those who had imperial interests in Italy protested. Moreover, the Lombard prelates, who, as we have already seen, were the most lax of any in their morals, with Guibert Corregese of Parma at their head, knowing Anselm's strict views concerning ecclesiastical discipline, determined to oppose his election, and worked upon the feelings of both the Empress Agnes and the young Emperor, by declaring that the imperial rights were being superseded, and that it was time for the Emperor to assert his prerogative.

On the very day (1st October 1061) that Anselm was enthroned in Rome under the protection of the Normans, his opponents held a council in Bâle,[1] where the Lombards and all those clergy who feared Anselm's rule, prevailed on the assembled archbishops to annul his election, and in his stead they caused Cadalous, Bishop of Parma, to be nominated Pope. The Empress and her son were present at the council and assented to the proceedings. Cadalous was a man of bad character, who had been censured at three different councils for his evil life, and had the charges been pressed he would probably have been deposed from his bishopric. That they were not, may have been owing to imperial influence, for when

[1] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. pp. 73, 74.

Henry III. was in Italy for the first time, Cadalous had managed to gain the Emperor's favour, although the Bishop of Parma had never been attracted to the reforms of the Church, and became the most bitter opponent of the Pataria faction. He had held his see for twenty years, and with much of his own private wealth he had helped to restore and embellish the seat of his bishopric,[1] so he was popular within the walls of Parma itself, and had also a strong adherent in Guibert, a Parmesan of good birth and distinguished bearing, who had likewise been a favourite of the Emperor Henry III., and had lately been appointed imperial chancellor by the Empress Agnes.

The nomination of Cadalous to the Papacy was not popular among the German prelates; moreover, it was in direct opposition to the reforming tendencies of the late Emperor; and it was very evident that before the Empress's consent to this step was won, her own private inclinations must have been overruled. On the other hand, the Roman aristocracy and the Campagna nobles who had resented the Papal alliance with the Normans were ready to offer their support to Alexander's rival. Benzo, Bishop of Alba, was sent in advance to prepare Rome for the entry of Cadalous (who assumed the name of Honorius II.), and to collect recruits, while in Lombardy Cadalous and Guibert were busily engaged in gathering together an army wherewith to march to Rome. The Patarines were terrified and forced to flee, and Beatrice opened many of her cities to them as a refuge. Duke

[1] The old cathedral of Parma was burnt down about the year 1058, and a new and more beautiful building was begun under Cadalous's auspices. He also rebuilt, upon another site outside the walls, the episcopal palace, adorning it with many towers. See Affò, vol. ii. pp. 63 and 69. The alabaster throne of this antipope is still preserved behind the choir in the cathedral.

Godfrey hastened to levy troops in all the towns and states which owed allegiance to his step-daughter. With part of these, Matilda, accompanied by her mother, hastened into Lombardy, where they met the schismatics and gave them battle. ' Now there appeared in Lombardy at the head of her numerous squadrons the young maid Matilda, armed like a warrior, and with such bravery, that she made known to the world that courage and valour in mankind is not indeed a matter of sex, but of heart and spirit ' (Dal Pozzo, p. 263).

The army of the antipope was not, however, entirely defeated in this encounter. It may have been held in check for the moment, but was soon able to cross the Apennines and ere long take up its quarters in the meadows of Nero, outside Rome.

In the meantime, Hildebrand and Alexander had not been idle; mainly through the instrumentality of Leo the converted Jew they had managed to raise an army of mercenaries, for Norman help was not available just then, Richard of Capua being busy fighting within his own domains. These, however, proved no match for the schismatics, who gained a footing in the Trasteverine quarter of the city, while some of the rebel Romans held St. Angelo. The latter were unable to maintain their position, however, and were shortly dislodged by a fresh body of troops raised by the aid of the wealthy Leo. But before matters could finally be decided, the appearance of Duke Godfrey with an overwhelming army put an end to further combat.[1] The Duke intervened between the

[1] Here Vedriani, and several of Matilda's biographers say that she was present at this engagement, and Vedriani adds that she shared with Arduino della Palude the command of a body of 400 archers, as many pikemen, and a detachment of cavalry, and that they nearly cut in pieces the army of Guibert in endeavouring to unite themselves with Godfrey's cavalry, and

contending parties, and demanded that they should each lay their cause before the young King or his representative, and await his decision, and that meanwhile Alexander and Cadalous should return to their respective episcopal sees. To this course they grudgingly consented, though it is doubtful whether Cadalous would have yielded without further struggle, had he known how events in Germany were conspiring against him. Cadalous went back to Parma, and Alexander to Lucca, the latter glad enough to spend the summer attending to ecclesiastical affairs within his old beloved diocese, for he never dissociated himself entirely from Lucca; even in his decrees he is thus designated, 'Primate of the universal Church and Bishop of Lucca.' To Lucca therefore went the Tuscan princes in company with the Pope, possibly for the sake of escorting and guarding him well, for the adherents of Cadalous were still many and active.

In the meanwhile the internecine politics of Germany suffered a change. A strong party of malcontents resolved to oust the Empress-regent from her place and substitute a different form of government. They were

charged the enemy with such fury that Guibert was obliged to relinquish the assault and retire with his forces behind the entrenchments. Guibert ('a man of great stature and a robust cavalier of his times, but as his physical strength was greater than that of an animal, so was his sense of justice less than that of a man') performed prodigies of valour, but in vain. Both he and Cadalous seeing that the day was lost, saved themselves, for the time being, by abandoning the campaign, and retired to Parma.

Vedriani further tells a pleasant story of how Matilda had occasion thus early to show the world how she abhorred massacres, sternly forbidding her army to slay the vanquished foe, only allowing them to take just vengeance on some of the Germans, who had grossly maltreated the people of the neighbouring districts. Then he adds: 'The Pope and the Roman people rejoiced greatly at this victory, and could never tire of beholding this valorous semblance of a woman, who surpassed in bravery and courage even the most brilliant and manly warriors.'

Fiorentini writes guardedly on this subject and refers to Sigonius and Platina.

tired of a woman's rule, and they hated most her favourite counsellor, Henry of Augsburg. Headed by Hanno, Archbishop of Cologne, they conceived the bold idea of carrying off the young King, and this they accomplished by strategy. Shortly after Easter, 1062, when the Empress and her son were staying at St. Swithberths (now Kaiserswerth) on the Rhine, the King was persuaded to go and inspect Hanno's magnificent barge, then moored alongside the landing-stage. The barge was forthwith freed from its moorings and vigorously rowed up stream. In spite of the boy's attempts to escape—for he threw himself overboard and had to be rescued—he was eventually taken to Cologne, where it was decided that the guardianship of the King, and the regency of his kingdom, should rest in the hands of the bishop of that diocese in which for the time being he happened to reside. Hanno was the most powerful amongst the prelates of the time, and he contrived that the King should most frequently be in his own diocese, or in that of his two chief friends, Gunther of Bamberg, and Siegfried of Mainz. Filled with ambition for his own advancement, Hanno cared in no way for the worthy upbringing of the boy under his care, but indulged the young King's whims as it suited his own ends, while Henry conceived for his guardian the greatest dislike and mistrust.

The Empress Agnes, who amidst tears and lamentations saw her son torn from her care, took no steps to force the bishops to restore him. Perhaps, much as she loved her son, she was not sorry to be compelled to lay aside the burden of government, for in secret she had long nourished a great desire to retire from the world into a convent. Some months later she was reconciled to Hanno

and his friends ; and over the heart of her son she always retained an influence, though, alas ! it was not sufficiently strong to mould his manhood aright. So during the following Christmas festivities (1063) a curious sight was witnessed in Rome. She who twelve years previously had appeared there in company with her husband, with all the pomp and ceremony of an Empress, attended by nobles and retainers without number, now entered the city as a humble penitent, mounted on a diminutive horse, and clad in a long woollen robe of sombre hue. Agnes had come to throw herself at the feet of Pope Alexander and to ask pardon for what she deemed her sin, in upholding Cadalous. She was received with infinite compassion by the Holy Father, and was granted the pardon that she sought. Hereafter, although the widowed Empress occasionally crossed the Alps to visit her son, Rome became her home for many years ; here she lived contentedly the life of a recluse, a steadfast friend to Popes Alexander and Gregory. Her piety, which manifested itself in fasting, almsgiving, and a most simple mode of life, was much commended.

The German bishops, after having settled the question of the guardianship of their King, convened a council at Augsburg (28th October 1062) to inquire into the contentions of the rival Popes. It was agreed that an envoy should be sent to Italy,[1] and if Alexander's election

[1] The account which Vedriani gives of the reception in Rome of the envoy (whom he declares to have been Hanno himself), although inaccurate in many details, is interesting to note in passing, for he makes Hildebrand reply to the royal messenger : 'That the ratification by the Emperor of the election of a Pope was required by the Holy See, not because the Royal or Imperial consent was necessary, but so that the Royal Power, in thus ratifying it, declared itself a protector of Ecclesiastical liberty against those animated by personal ambition, or those who at times, by the aid of simony, had falsely corrupted the Chair of Peter' (Ved., vol. ii. p. 30). If Hildebrand did not

did not prove to be wholly irregular, he should be reinstated temporarily in Rome, and there continue in his apostolic duties until such time as a larger synod could be assembled to sift the whole matter more thoroughly. Burchard, Bishop of Halberstadt, Hanno's nephew, was chosen as envoy. His inquiries in Italy proved favourable to Alexander, who was forthwith installed in Rome, thanks to the combined efforts of Duke Godfrey, and some Norman troops furnished by Richard of Capua.

Cadalous's party still held the fortress of St. Angelo, for the wily bishop was by no means willing to remain quiescent during Alexander's provisional occupancy of the Apostolic See. In spite of the efforts of Godfrey and Beatrice to bar his passage, he once more crossed the Apennines, appeared before Rome, and gained the Leonine quarter. Many a street fight ensued, but nothing decisive occurred in his favour. Peter Damian, upon his return from an embassy to France (October 1063), was moved by the disorderly state of Rome to write a strong letter of appeal to Archbishop Hanno (who had lately been made co-regent of the kingdom with Adalbert of Bremen), begging him to hasten the time of the synod, as had been agreed in Augsburg. Hanno complied, decided to attend the council in person as the King's representative, and Mantua was the city chosen for the place of assembly. Curiously enough, the summons to the synod was ill received in Rome by Alexander's adherents. Cadalous's activities were waning, for his resources were almost at an end, and his erstwhile allies, the Campagna nobles, had deserted him.

actually utter these words, it was doubtless this spirit that moved him to desire the ratification by Germany of the Pope's election. There is some authority for them, however, in Cardinal Nicholas of Aragon's account (*Vit. Rom. Pont.*, p. 302). Here, too, Hanno is said to be the envoy.

Why, therefore, should Alexander be compelled to submit his cause to the decision of Germany, when the opposition to his election had all but disappeared? Hildebrand was indignant with Peter Damian for having pressed the matter of the council. However, there was was no other course open to Alexander and his party but to comply with the summons. This synod attracted universal attention, and we can well believe that Vedriani gives us a true picture of the proceedings, for he writes of the 'magnificent preparations' made by Beatrice and Matilda for the reception and entertainment of so many distinguished guests, since the Pope, and the King's representatives from Germany, were to be accompanied by an infinite number of prelates and princes, the 'greatest in the world.' Then we are told how Matilda and her stepfather, with a large squadron of cavalry, proceeded to Rome to escort the Pope and the College of Cardinals on their journey. They were met by Beatrice on the confines of Mantua, and safely installed within the city. Duke Godfrey then hastened to meet the German embassy coming from the north, and Beatrice and Matilda rode forth a little way from the city to greet them. Truly it must have been a wonderful assembly then gathered together in the little city of Mantua!

On the 31st of May (1064) Alexander celebrated High Mass in the cathedral, after which the council proceeded to its work. Hanno stated the accusations made against Alexander:—That he had caused himself to be elected Pope contrary to the established rule, that he had purchased the Pontificate, and that he had allied himself with the Normans against the interests of the Empire. Alexander solemnly justified his conduct with an oath, and as Cadalous was not present to advance his claims, the council declared itself satisfied that Alexander's

appointment was legitimate, and he was forthwith hailed as lawful successor to St. Peter, a solemn *Te Deum* was chanted, after which Cadalous's cause was tried and he was excommunicated. But the following day, when the council was still sitting, a terrible tumult broke out in the town, instigated by the partisans of Cadalous. The insurgents broke into the cathedral and would have attacked the prelates, who were hastily preparing for flight, when the timely arrival of Beatrice with an armed force put the rebels to rout. Peace was restored, and the synod terminated its work, after which the various bishops departed. Pope Alexander lingered in Lucca for a time on his way south, while Cadalous (who had been awaiting the news of the result of the synod near by, in the Cremonese country), nothing daunted by the unfavourable issue, returned with Guibert to Parma to collect money and forces for further efforts against the Pope.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VII

There are many conflicting accounts of the Council of Mantua —even the date of it has been contested (see Giesebrecht, vol. iii. pp. 1106-1107); the most likely year, however, seems 1064.

Two ancient writers (Amalricus Augerius in *Vit. Rom. Pont.*; Muratori, *Rer. It. Script.* vol. iii. pt. ii. p. 356), and Ptolemy of Lucca, a thirteenth-century historian, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Mur., *Rer. It. Script.*, vol. xi. p. 1073, etc.), distinctly say that Alexander held the council in Henry's presence.

Vedriani mentions Henry's attending the council, and Pigna in his history of the Este family says 'Cæsar came to Italy and was royally received in the City of Mantua by Beatrice and Matilda. . . . Beatrice and Matilda honoured Cæsar with divers festivities.' The German historian Giesebrecht, however, says that Henry remained in Germany, under the care of Adalbert of Bremen, during Hanno's visit to Mantua to attend the council.

CHAPTER VIII

Cadalous and Guibert induce the Normans to invade the Papal Territory—The Normans march on Rome—Beatrice attempts to entrap Cadalous—Cadalous, however, reaches Rome, and takes the Leonine quarter—Duke Godfrey's forces drive off the Schismatics and enter Rome—Cadalous remains in St. Angelo—Holds the fortress for two years—Finally driven out and flees from Rome—Godfrey is held by some to have been privy to his escape—Alexander appoints his nephew Anselm as Matilda's spiritual adviser—Renewed conflict with the Normans —Their rout at Aquino.

MANY and various are the plots ascribed to Cadalous and Guibert at this period. After having collected sufficient sums of money to raise troops, they set to work once more to overthrow Alexander and to contest the Papacy. Also they are said to have suborned Cencius, son of the prefect of Rome, and he and his adherents promised their support within the walls, while at the same time these two arch-schismatics are supposed to have entered into a secret alliance with the Normans.

Certain it is that about this time the aggressions of Richard of Capua were an added anxiety to Alexander, for Richard had extended his conquests northwards, had taken several towns, and had not always respected the Papal territory; finally, intoxicated with his successes, he had appeared at the gates of Rome and demanded to be made Patricius, a title generally reserved for the Emperor-elect. It was quite evident whither his

ambition was leading him, and once more Alexander was forced to rely on his friends in the north.

Alexander is said to have sent word to Matilda, begging her to hold herself in readiness to come and succour Rome once more, if necessary. As soon as she heard of the antipope's proceedings she prepared to oppose him. Duke Godfrey with a body of cavalry was at once despatched to meet the Normans, while Beatrice, and doubtless Matilda with her, only lingered behind to collect a sufficiently strong force, with which they endeavoured to entrap Cadalous on the Aemilian Way, and prevent his march southwards. Somewhere near Forzelli Beatrice had a deep trench dug in the road and covered with straw and dust—'the same kind of trap that the vineyard owners employ to catch wolves,' says Vedriani.[1] 'I know not,' he adds quaintly, 'whether Cadalous, a true wolf, and false Pope, fell in.'

Evidently if Cadalous *did* fall in, he managed to extricate himself quickly, for he arrived outside Rome, together with Guibert, and again encamped by the meadows of Nero, from which point they proceeded to assault the city.

The following night, through the aid of their partisans within, Cadalous and Guibert succeeded in taking the 'Leonine' quarter,[2] and they then sacked the Vatican Palace and St. Peter's.

The Tuscan army, commanded by its two princesses,

[1] Ved., vol. ii. p. 34.

[2] During the Pontificate of Symmachus, at the end of the fifth century, a Papal residence was built near the Church of St. Peter's, and foreign pilgrims began to establish settlements there. These were called 'scholæ' or 'borghi,' and the whole district was sometimes called the Borgo. In the ninth century Pope Leo IV. surrounded this region with a wall to protect it against the ravages of the Saracen invaders, and from that time forth it was also known as the 'Leonine city.'

must have pursued Cadalous closely, and arrived to the rescue of Rome the day after the taking of the Borgo. Again Vedriani gives us a delightful picture. 'In the face of the schismatics she, Matilda, entered Rome with her army, with such a train of provisions that Richard began to form plans for retreat to some strong place. Matilda kissed the feet of the Pope, and then took counsel with her captains on the best way of delivering the city from the siege. Rallying the faint-hearted Romans, she attacked the enemy with such fury, that they were forced to abandon the greater part of the Borgo, and could only retain the castle of St. Angelo;'[1] and they continued to hold this fortress for a considerable period of time—a couple of years, say some historians.

It is very difficult to arrive at a true conclusion with regard to this fact. We are inclined to think that there is some confusion about Cadalous's first and second attack of Rome, and that possibly from 1063 until 1065 the Borgo was in a state of disaffection, for we are told that during these years Alexander transacted business at the Lateran Palace. Therefore St. Angelo may have been in the hands of the schismatics all the time, although Cadalous and Guibert were not shut up there during the whole two years, as is sometimes stated. We may conclude that Guibert and Cadalous defended themselves for a considerable time in St. Angelo, but finding their cause was growing hopeless, they fled from Rome with the greater number of their adherents, but were overtaken outside the city along the Flaminian Way near Ponte

[1] The tomb of Hadrian, called later the castle of St. Angelo, on the right bank of the Tiber, converted into a fortress in the fifth century, sometime previous to the invasion of the city by the Ostrogoths in 537, was henceforth regarded as the citadel of Rome, and the possession of it was considered an equivalent for the mastery over the whole city.

Molle. Here an engagement ensued in which they were utterly routed, and report says they would have been captured had they not purchased their liberty for a considerable sum of money and been allowed to go in peace. Some accounts say that it was Cencius who was thus bribed, while other historians imply that the elder Godfrey, Matilda's step-father, was privy to their escape. That there was some treachery on Godfrey's part, about this time, is evident from the letters of Peter Damian. 'An unheard-of news has reached us,' writes Peter Damian to Godfrey;[1] 'it has caused us great grief and stricken us with inmost sorrow; it has closed my lips—those lips which have been accustomed to praise you. It is that you are in communication with Cadalous, that vile and rotten member cut off from the Church . . . that abject filth. This is what the peasants in the country, the merchants in the fairs, the soldiers in the public places, cry aloud to us.'

Godfrey is said to have been greatly biassed by his two chaplains, who upheld the views of the schismatics with regard to the marriage of priests, and who declared further that a bishopric or a benefice might be purchased without the sin of simony being committed, provided that the consecration was gratuitous.

Alexander, becoming anxious lest Matilda should be influenced in any way by the heretical opinions of her step-father, desired that she should take his nephew Anselm, a man of great piety and learning, as her spiritual director. The relations between Matilda and Anselm were of a very happy nature, and from this time forth Matilda

[1] An Italian version of this letter is given by Rena, vol. ii. p. 60 *et seq.* See also Villemain, vol. i. p. 362; there is an allusion to it in Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 154; also see note.

could always depend on his spiritual comfort and advice. Later on, when Anselm became Bishop of Lucca, he was enabled to help her with her temporal affairs as well, and uphold her authority with her turbulent subjects in that city.

Although the rebellion was successfully quelled, and the schismatics expelled from Rome itself, peace was not yet restored. The Normans, dissatisfied with the rout of Cadalous, continued to overrun Campania, and hoped to gain entire possession of the province. Matters became so threatening that Matilda, Duke Godfrey, and the Pontiff himself, decided to take the field and drive off the invaders. It was thought that the presence of the Holy Father would animate and encourage the Catholic soldiery, and strike terror to the hearts of his enemies.

The two armies met near Aquino, and there a long and sanguinary fight ensued, lasting eighteen days. The Normans were beaten back and forced to restore the Church territories to the Pope; Godfrey and Matilda with their army once more returned to Rome, where Matilda was hailed as a conqueror and treated with every honour. Fiorentini[1] says that the engagement at Aquino took place in the middle of the month of May 1066.

Such is an outline of the account given by most of Matilda's biographers, anxious to glorify their heroine. Cardinal Nicholas of Aragon says too, describing the manner in which the Normans were overrunning Campania:[2] 'Therefore the Archdeacon Hildebrand, unwilling

[1] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 92.

[2] *Vitae Rom. Pont.*, p. 303. There is a very similar passage in Bonitho, *Liber ad Amicum* (ed. Jaffé), pp. 652-53, and that is certainly contemporary evidence.

to tolerate these aggressions, appealed for help to the most powerful Duke Godfrey in the recovery of the patrimony of the Blessed Peter. At his summons the celebrated Duke, together with the illustrious Countess Matilda, quickly collected an immense army and hastened to Rome, and set forth against the Normans in great force . . . and having recovered the city of Capua, and restored it to the Roman Church, the glorious Duke and the Countess Matilda returned with joy to the care of the Lord Alexander.' Yet, on the other hand, later historians declare that there is no contemporary evidence in favour of the statement that she accompanied her step-father on this expedition, nor do these writers make much of the battle of Aquino.[1] It is certain, however, that some sort of an agreement was arrived at between the contending forces, and that Alexander and Richard were reconciled is evident, from the fact that the following summer, 1067, Alexander stayed at Capua on his way to Rome after a journey made in southern Italy, to promote the work of Church reform. Sometime later, in the year 1071, an immense assembly of Norman chiefs and southern bishops, together with princes from all parts of Italy, were gathered at Monte Cassino, when Pope Alexander consecrated the new abbey church. The presence of a great number of South Italian bishops was a proof how much the Papacy owed to the Normans, since they had been the means of wresting many of these sees from the hands of the infidels—or from the Eastern Church.

[1] See Chalandon, vol. i. p. 221 ; also Overman, p. 124. The latter, however, mentions Bonitho's account of Matilda's presence in the south of Italy, but is inclined to discredit it, since it is confirmed by no other writer of the period.

CHAPTER IX

Confusion existing regarding the date of Matilda's marriage with Godfrey of Lorraine—Vedriani's account—Most probably the marriage took place between 1069 and 1071—Differences between husband and wife—Matilda's journey into Lorraine—Return to Italy—Godfrey in Italy in 1073—Gregory elected Pope—Evil conduct of the young Emperor—Gregory's Council in 1074.

IT is a curious and harassing fact that so little reliable information about Matilda is available; many documents that would have helped us have perished, or disappeared, and it is often difficult to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion from the histories of her life still extant. Her birthplace is uncertain, even the year of her birth disputed, and as regards her marriage with Godfrey the Hunchback, there are many conflicting accounts, each of which places it in some different year, covering the times between 1059 and 1072.[1]

Vedriani in his picturesque way says:[2] 'In the same year' (*i.e.* 1059) 'the Countess Matilda, who, in her travels to Florence and Sutri, and in returning to Mantua, had been admired by the populace as an unusual spectacle of beauty and valour, and had been seen as a new Bellona amidst the armed companies, having reached the mar-

[1] Overman (p. 124) inclines to think that Godfrey and Matilda were formally betrothed in the year 1057. Repetti (vol. vi.) says that in 1055 an act of donation to the abbey of Jean Batiste at Florennes, in the Duchy of Luxembourg, mention is made of both mother and daughter (*i.e.* Beatrice and Matilda) being already married at that date.

[2] Vedriani, vol. ii. pp. 23, 24.

riageable age of thirteen . . . was married at Mantua (according to the wish of the Duke of Lorraine and Beatrice) to the Prince Godfrey. A sister of this prince, named Ida, of holy life and manners, was married at the same time to Eustace, Count of Bouillon, and was mother of Godfrey of Bouillon, who was afterwards created King of Jerusalem. There did not exist between these two who were thus joined together that passion of love which is called by philosophers "love of love," but only that affection of human love, which consists in true friendship.'

We are inclined, however, to think that the worthy Modenese historian has mistaken his dates, and has also confused the two Godfreys, since in her several journeyings, and in her visits to Rome and the campaigns against Cadalous, he says further that Matilda was accompanied by the two Godfreys, father and son. Godfrey the elder undoubtedly accompanied Matilda to Rome and into the field of battle, but there is no documentary evidence to prove that his son Godfrey was ever in Italy before 1072.[1] The most probable date for Matilda's marriage seems to have been between 1069-1071.

Duke Godfrey had occasion to visit Lorraine in the year 1068 or 1069; in 1069 he was stricken by mortal illness, and it is believed that both Beatrice and Matilda hastened from Italy to Lorraine and were present at his deathbed.

Duke Godfrey's death is described by a contemporary chronicler in a very graphic way.[2] As he felt his end approaching he betook himself to his castle of Bouillon in the Ardennes, and commanded the presence of the

[1] See Dieckmann, p. 17.

[2] See *Chron. Huberti Andaginensis* (ed. Migne).

abbot of St. Hubert, Dietrich by name. Godfrey made him a full confession of his sins, and with heavy sobs handed over to him the sword he had loved so well, knowing that his time had come, and that never more could he draw it in battle. Then he had himself carried to the neighbouring Church of St. Peter, and explained to the abbot in the presence of his son Godfrey, how he had determined to build here a monastery, in accomplishment of a vow he had made before the Pope. He then presented the abbot with a precious casket containing relics of the saints, which had formerly been collected by the Marquis Boniface. Godfrey now wished that the casket and its contents should form part of the endowment of the abbey, and desired the abbot to see to the accomplishment of his vow, when he himself should be no more. The abbot gave the promise very unwillingly, knowing how unacceptable it was to Godfrey's son, who was not so devoted to the religious life as was his father. At length, however, Dietrich complied with the dying warrior's request, and in a happy frame of mind Godfrey was taken from Bouillon to Verdun, where he peacefully awaited his last hour, attended by Matilda and her mother. Here at Christmas 1069 he breathed his last.

Godfrey, whose history has concerned us here in so far as it touched Matilda's, had known the most curious reverses of fate. Born to a great inheritance, he had been driven from it as a fugitive, and had endured days of utter misery; then a lucky stroke of fortune had placed him in a position of almost kingly grandeur—tradition has it that an imperial crown might have been his, and although that high place was never granted him, for the rest of his life he occupied an unusually prominent and influential position. But his latter days

were marred by the suspicion of his allies, and there was something lacking in his character which prevents his name from standing out clearly amongst the great men of these times. Posterity can see in him only a man who knew how to use the moment to the best advantage for himself, but whose ambition ever had some mysterious check on it, and he certainly had not learned the value of truth and righteousness, in spite of the possession of very manly qualities. 'He had been feared by all, trusted by few,' and his death was a relief to allies and enemies alike.

Some historians think that Matilda's marriage to the younger Godfrey was actually consummated at that time. This seems the most likely date,[1] for although there is a document, dated 1st of January 1071, at Pisa, in which Matilda is referred to as 'daughter of Marquis Boniface of blessed memory,' as Dieckmann has pointed out, there is nothing in this document to prove that she was present when it was drawn up. On the 28th of September of this year Beatrice,[2] alone at Frassinoro, makes a donation 'for the soul of my beloved daughter Matilda,' which seems to indicate that Matilda is very far from her. It is possible, therefore, that Beatrice returned to Italy alone after the death of Godfrey the elder; if this were so, she would hardly have left Matilda had she not been already married.[3]

In the Chronicle of St. Hubert,[4] the monastery in the Ardennes to which Duke Godfrey made his dying donation, there is mention made that the younger Godfrey and the Abbot Dietrich quarrelled, as Godfrey refused to

[1] Pannenborg, p. 26. [2] *Idem*, and see Overman, pp. 125-126.
[3] See Overman, pp. 126, 243-244.
[4] *Chronicon. S. Huberti Andag.* (ed. Migne).

carry out his father's wishes with respect to the donation, and that after this ' his wife Matilda left him and returned to Lombardy ' ; and in January 1072 we have evidence that Matilda was with Beatrice at Mantua,[1] where there is a parchment in which she styles herself ' Countess and Duchess,' an exceedingly rare thing with her.

Absurd legends have grown up around the subject of Matilda's marriage. For instance, Mellini quotes two accounts of earlier writers, one of which says that Matilda made war upon her husband, and the other that she had his head cut off as she could not stand his barbarous treatment ! Riccobaldo, a Ferrarese historian of the thirteenth century, after describing Matilda thus : ' A woman of great talent, admirable courage, and marvellous strength . . . she had great beauty, which she retained even to the last years of her life,' relates calmly that, because she could not brook his interference in the government of her states, she had her husband murdered, and richly rewarded the murderer. Of the more sober-minded writers after Vedriani, come many who say that Matilda consented to a political marriage with the younger Godfrey, in order that both he and his father might be induced to fight against Cadalous—others say against the Normans, but that she expressly stipulated that it should only be a marriage of state.

Those of her biographers who lived at a time when the division between laity and clergy, between the purely secular and the cloistered life, had grown more distinct, and who, being biassed by ecclesiastical opinions, are anxious to prove that Matilda's life must have been the ideal life of a woman of later days, either ignore her marriages, or declare that neither of them was ever

[1] See Pannenborg, p. 26.

consummated. For in the latter part of the Middle Ages the Church held that woman's devotion to God could only be proved by renouncing the life of the world for the life of the cloister. Now Matilda unquestionably devoted her life to the service of God and His Church, but it was necessary to prove in the eyes of these historians that she had conformed as far as possible to the ecclesiastical ideal, and that although compelled to live in the world she was in no respect of it, and that she practically lived the life of a nun.

Obedience? Was she not obedient to every command laid on her by Pope, bishop, or priest? Poverty? Had she not stripped herself of wealth and possessions for the good of Holy Church? Therefore she could not fail likewise to have kept the nun's third vow. But the researches of modern historians have completely disposed of this constructive attempt of the priestly biographers, and as Matilda [1] repeatedly refers to Godfrey as her husband, it seems highly probable that the *filius hereditarius*,[2] whose existence was at least contemplated in a contemporary instrument, was actually born to Godfrey and Matilda, though in any case he did not survive his infancy. It is curious to note in passing that while Italian contemporary history either wilfully ignores the possibility of this child, or else was really ignorant of the circumstances, a century later there are many allusions to it. Although grotesque legends were current about Matilda's son, it would seem as if they all came from some thin source of truth, as if something—

[1] In a donation to the Church of S. Martin in Lucca of the year 1079, Matilda calls herself 'Marchioness and Duchess, widow of the late Godfrey who was Duke,' and later refers to the 'afore-mentioned Godfrey who was my husband.' From Fiorentini's collection of documents, p. 105.

[2] Overman, p. 243; Dieckmann, p. 17.

some vague, remembered story—had slowly filtered down from far Lorraine and found its way into Italy, to be straightway hidden far beneath the surface in a deep bed of fiction.[1]

The following is the so-called 'Legend of Orval' (from Clouet's *Histoire de Verdun*, vol. ii. p. 109), often referred to by modern writers. It is to be regretted that so interesting and detailed a narrative of Matilda's son should have no documentary evidence to support it, and must therefore be regarded entirely as fiction. The dates are obviously inaccurate, and moreover, as Dieckmann points out, had this six-year-old son been in existence at the time of his father's death, Duke Godfrey would hardly have bequeathed his estates to his nephew, Godfrey of Bouillon :—

'The Duchess Matilda, when she came to this country, was still young : she had with her her only son, who was eight years of age. They were seeking both a refuge and wise counsel from Godfrey of Bouillon, their relation, after the assassination of the glorious Duke Godfrey of Lorraine. Matilda, full of sadness, wished to renounce the world and confide her son to the care of Richer of Metz, who shortly afterwards became Bishop of Verdun ; but the Duke of Bouillon dissuaded her from taking this step, saying that the young heir to so large estates ought to be instructed from his youth upwards in the arts of war, as well as in the science of government ; and many days were passed in deliberating on this subject. It was the winter season, which, in this particular year, was of such rigour, that on the Semois, the river of Chiny, the

[1] See *Chronica de Civitate Januensis*, 'edita a Frate Jacobo da Voragine, chap. xiv ; *Historia Imperatorum* of Riccobaldo (about 1295) ; *Chron. de reb. Ven.* of Lorenzo dei Monaci, and Ughelli's *Italia Sacra.*

ice could bear the heaviest carriages. The people of the neighbourhood amused themselves with sporting on the ice: they even held a fair on the river, with all sorts of shows; and the young prince, attracted by the noise, ran out of the castle to play upon the ice with the children of his own age. In the middle of their games a terrible thing occurred: the ice broke under his feet, and as he fell into the water the sharp edges of the ice cut off his head. He alone perished in this accident, which leads one to suspect that the wicked men who coveted his heritage had prepared this trap for him. Thus perished this young prince, in 1079, two years after his father. Matilda's grief is indescribable: she bitterly regretted the abandonment of her plan of confiding her unfortunate son to the care of Richer at Metz. She had him buried by the side of his ancestors, and then fear seized hold of her when she reflected that this tragic event was perhaps the result of a conspiracy against her son, and she hastily departed for Italy, almost as if in flight.'

Fiorentini, in the first part of his *Life*, declares that there is little doubt that Matilda was actually married to Godfrey the younger, that the marriage took place probably about 1069 by proxy,[1] but that it was not consummated till 1072. It can be proved that Godfrey was in Italy in 1072-73, and was exercising his rights as Duke and Marquis of Tuscany in conjunction with Beatrice at Pisa and Ancona.[2] Moreover, Fiorentini says that Godfrey the younger was never in Italy before 1072.[3] Dal Pozzo also places Matilda's marriage by proxy in the

[1] In Part II. he contradicts this, and after much reasoning on the matter, inclines to think Matilda was not actually married to Godfrey. See Part II. pp. 321-327. See here Don Tosti, pp. 296-97 (ed. 1859).

[2] Overman, pp. 127-128. Also Muratori, *Annali*, vol. vi. p. 20.

[3] Fiorentini, lib. I. p. 101.

year 1069,[1] and affirms Godfrey did not visit Italy until 1072. (Both Fiorentini and Dal Pozzo were ignorant of the fact of Matilda's journey to Lorraine.) Against this we have the statement of a modern historical writer, Villemain, who says that Godfrey returned to Lorraine from Italy after his father's death, and was then absent from Italy for some years.[2] Certainly it would seem curious that, since Godfrey the elder had established himself in Tuscany for nearly twenty years, his son should only visit that country after his death.

When and where the marriage occurred may remain contested points, but all historians agree that it was far from being a happy union. Except for the gift of courage they both possessed, there could have been little in common between these two. As they differed physically, Matilda strong, straight, and beautiful, Godfrey short, deformed, and hideous, so their tastes differed. Matilda was too entirely devoted to the affairs of the Church to be able to give to her husband more than a very partial consideration, and if it were only reasons of state that urged her to this step, she must soon have repented of it. With her step-father she always appears to have had great sympathy—perhaps at first she hoped for the same with his son! Yet Godfrey the Hunchback, in spite of his physical drawbacks, had many attractive qualities—his valour, his perspicacity and wisdom are spoken of with respect by more than one historian. 'To our citizens' (*i.e.* of Verdun) 'he was never an oppressor, but always a most kind and bounteous ruler,' writes Laurence of Liège,[3] and Mellini calls him 'gentilissimo Donzello'—a most gentle knight.[4]

[1] Dal Pozzo, p. 247.
[2] Villemain, however, quotes no authorities for this statement.
[3] Quoted from Dieckmann, p. 86. [4] Mellini, p. 32.

The Italian historians have entirely ignored the fact of Matilda's visits to Lorraine, and have implied that she never left Italy. We do not know for certain whether Matilda and Godfrey ever actually met again after 1072-73, although letters must have been exchanged between them. The Chronicle of St. Hubert tells us that Godfrey wrote to his wife commanding her to return to him, but she replied, telling him he ought to come to Italy in order to restore to her keeping the ivory casket containing the relics of some saints which had once belonged to Boniface, her father, and which her step-father Godfrey had handed over to the Abbot Dietrich as earnest of his bequest, as we have already seen. Godfrey eventually did comply with his wife's request, and came down to Italy bearing the ivory casket, which he had wrested from the abbot by violence, but Matilda does not seem to have been pleased even at the restitution of her property, for in January 1073 we hear of him in Pisa together with Beatrice, where they sat in judgment in a court of law;[1] and as there is no evidence to prove that Matilda was present, and as there is a document extant which shows that on the 8th of February she was at St. Frediano, Lucca, where she alone is mentioned, it would seem as if she had avoided a meeting with her husband. On the other hand, Dieckmann[2] thinks that it is probable such a meeting had already taken place at the end of 1072 in Lombardy, possibly at Reggio, where Matilda and her mother made a donation to the abbey of San Prospero, and it is supposed by some writers that Matilda and Godfrey were present together at Gregory's consecration in Rome (June 1073.)

In the meantime, in Germany the young King Henry

[1] Overman, p. 127. [2] Dieckmann, p. 42.

was growing to manhood, dissolute and unrestrained, unfortunately too readily influenced by evil companions. Already in 1065 he had been declared of age, but he still remained under the power of the princes, and intrigue succeeded intrigue; on the whole, however, Germany remained on good terms with Rome, and cordial letters passed from time to time between the Pope and the various prelates in power in Germany, for the latter were very anxious that, at no very distant date, their young King should receive the imperial crown from the Pope. In the year 1066, however, Henry's first serious quarrel with his nobles took place. Before his father's death, while yet an infant, he had been betrothed to Bertha, daughter of one of the most powerful Burgundian nobles, Otto of Savoy, Count of Turin, Maurienne, and Tarantaise, and of Adelaide, daughter of Manfred of Susa, 'who had ruled over a territory which stretched from the Alpine heights to the Dora Baltea and the Po.'[1] This Adelaide had first married Herman of Suabia, a step-brother of Henry III., who, besides Suabia, had the countship of Turin. At her father's death in 1035, in default of sons, Adelaide was declared his heiress. Upon the death of her first husband (1038) she also undertook the government of his estates, and her third husband,[2] Otto, dying while his son was still a minor, she had his lands under her rule as well. Thus she held sway over an enormous tract of territory on both sides of the Alps, which she ruled with a very firm hand, and even when her sons grew to manhood she appears still to have held the reins of government. Henry III. doubtless thought the marriage of his son with a daughter of this powerful

[1] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 189-190.

[2] The second husband seems to have been insignificant.

lady would be a great political advantage, and serve as a counterbalance to the power wielded in Italy by Duke Godfrey. Bertha was of gentle disposition, amiable and beautiful, and although educated at the German court, she was utterly untouched by the evil influences about her, and was devoted to the King. To his affianced bride Henry,[1] however, evinced the greatest repugnance, and was enraged when his nobles insisted that the marriage should take place, for he fancied this was only another way of curtailing his liberty, and that Bertha was but a tool in their hands. The marriage was celebrated in the summer of 1066, but Henry steadily refused to live with his wife, and three years later he publicly announced his intention of obtaining a divorce, having first won over Siegfried, Bishop of Mainz, to promise to support him in this attempt. The nobles, dismayed at this announcement, begged that the matter might be settled at a council, and meanwhile the Pope's opinion was demanded. Alexander despatched Peter Damian to attend the council as his representative, and the King was much incensed at the emphatic refusal given to this demand. Peter Damian did not spare the young monarch, and further declared that if he persisted in repudiating his wife, the Pope would deny him the crown of Empire, and Siegfried was told that he would be deprived of his bishopric and excommunicated, if he upheld the King any further in his unworthy intentions.[2] The King, finding that he could hope for no support in his attempts to rid himself of his wife, finally gave way and agreed to meet the Queen and try to overcome his dislike. At length her gentle ways were the means of changing his feelings of aversion, and Bertha succeeded in winning his

[1] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 133. [2] Giesebrecht, vol. iii. pp. 149-150.

sincere affection ; in his days of bitterest trial it was to his wife that he could always turn for comfort and help.

In spite of Peter Damian's wrathful words to Henry, he seems to have been favourably impressed by the young King ; on the other hand, he was disgusted with the German court and its licentiousness. He found everywhere throughout the kingdom that bishoprics and the important Church offices were bought and sold, and the clergy living in wedlock. Many of the great German prelates were summoned to Rome and made to do penance for their sins of simony ; some of them were afterwards pardoned by the Pope and allowed to resume their offices ; others, like Hanno, did penance by voluntarily assuming a very humble mode of life in some monastery.

From the beginning Henry was prejudiced against the great princes of his kingdom, and he never forgave Bishop Hanno for his *coup d'état*. He had been bred in an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion towards the more important of his vassal princes, and was inclined to choose his friends amongst those who belonged naturally to a lower rank. Upon these favourites he would bestow some particular mark of distinction, or offer them some high office of state. This again created jealousy and endless petty strifes, for the nobles resented the presence of these men of low birth, whom they regarded as mere adventurers.

At first Henry does not seem to have adopted an attitude of hostility to Rome. As we have already seen, he yielded to the Pope's authority regarding his wife, and although he often received big sums of money in exchange for the appointment to a bishopric and seized the Church's lands, he had several times accepted an ecclesiastical

candidate in place of his own, when he found decided opposition to his wishes.[1]

In Rome, meantime, Alexander continued to wage war against ecclesiastical abuses. The great synods convened by the Pope almost every Easter became after a while a recognised annual institution. From the year 1072 onwards they were held in Lent, and growing in importance, were attended by great prelates and lowly priests, by mighty princes and humble seigneurs, from every quarter of Western Christendom. The deliberations of these councils embraced all questions of the day; results of their decisions were carried far and wide; at first engaged more closely upon purely ecclesiastical questions, slowly and steadily the decrees of the synods were brought to bear on matters temporal, and the political opinions emanating from Rome grew more and more important in the minds of the men, who acknowledged her right thus to deliver judgment. In an age when learning and culture, such as we understand them, were in abeyance, when all means of communication were uncertain and unreliable, when the witness of the eye and the ear had more weight with the majority of people than the written word, no surer method of conveying news, of enforcing commands, of impressing upon men's minds the grandeur and the majesty of the Roman Church, could possibly have been devised.

During the last few years of Alexander's Pontificate the position of the Papacy was wonderfully strengthened by the far-reaching policy of Hildebrand. In Lombardy in particular, the death of Cadalous, which occurred in 1072, put an end to the schism for the time being, while

[1] See Giesebrecht on the subject of the Bishop of Constance and the abbey of Bamberg.

the Patarines grew in power, especially in the cities of Piacenza and Cremona. In the south of Italy, as we have already seen, although the Normans were occasionally disposed to overstep the bounds of the alliance they they had entered into with the Papacy, on the whole they rendered the Church a signal service in wresting the land from the Eastern Empire, and later in expelling the infidels from the whole of Sicily. Outside of the peninsula also the Church was assuming a more authoritative attitude. William the Norman went to the conquest of England with a banner blessed by the Pope, who favoured this undertaking, hoping thus to win over the full allegiance of the island to the Papacy. In France, in Spain, strong efforts were being made to enforce the new reforms, to put down simony, and forbid the marriage of the priests. In far-off Poland and in distant Scandinavia, in Hungary and Bohemia, all over those parts of the world which acknowledged the authority of the Western Church, a new feeling of deference to her decrees, of obedience to her commands, was slowly evolving itself.

In Germany, side by side with those who most earnestly desired reform in the Church, was a strong body of prelates who, lax in discipline themselves, were most averse to any change in the existing state of affairs, and the decrees prohibiting clerical marriages were the most unpopular of all. There were also many who from political motives viewed the growing power of the Papacy with a great mistrust, and these now counselled the King to firmness in the matter of the archbishopric of Milan. Bishop Wido had died in 1071, and Henry's nominee for the vacant see, Godfrey, a Milanese sub-deacon, had already been excommunicated by the Pope. For Wido

had previously abdicated, and Godfrey had been put forward uncanonically as his successor, and then had received support from Germany. Wido, however, did penance for having recommended Godfrey, and had resumed his office, which he held till his death. It was now intimated that if the King did not persist in upholding Godfrey, German prestige in Lombardy would be irrevocably lowered. Henry, already growing anxious about his position with regard to the Papacy, and tenacious of what he considered the royal prerogative, determined upon decisive action. In 1073, at a synod held at Novara, presided over by the royal envoy, Rapoto of Cham, the Lombard bishops consecrated Godfrey.

This act of defiance could not be passed unnoticed by Rome, and at the Lenten synod in that same year, five of the King's intimate counsellors were pronounced excommunicate. Henry, however, persisted in upholding Godfrey's cause in Milan, and did not dismiss his evil advisers. But only a few weeks after the termination of the Lenten synod, Alexander passed away (21st April 1073), and it was with the master-mind, that had practically directed the policy of the Church for a quarter of a century, a still more powerful opponent, that Henry now had to deal. For with one accord the Romans, nobles, clergy, and people acclaimed Hildebrand as their sovereign Pontiff. In the Lateran Church, at Alexander's funeral, the populace, the laity, and the clergy pressed round the archdeacon, crying, 'Hildebrand is Pope! The blessed Peter has elected Hildebrand!' Cardinal Hugues le Blanc, who had formerly been a zealous partisan of Cadalous and was now devoted to Hildebrand —though later he once more deserted him—made an

impassioned speech in his favour,[1] and the people and the clergy shouted, 'St. Peter has chosen Lord Gregory as Pope!' Thus was Gregory elected by the people at large, and the election confirmed by the choice of the Roman cardinals, bishops, and clergy. Although the question of Henry's conduct with regard to the investiture at Milan was still unsettled, and relations with the imperial court were not on a friendly footing, and although Hildebrand had been mainly instrumental in bringing about the increase in the power of the Papacy, no active opposition seems to have been made to his appointment, and at his consecration the presence of Gregory, Bishop of Vercelli, the King's chancellor, seems to indicate a tacit consent on the part of Henry to Hildebrand's election. There is no positive proof, moreover,[2] that Henry's assent had been previously demanded by the Pope-elect.

The ceremony of consecration took place on the 30th of June 1073. Beatrice is mentioned as being present, and it is thought by some historians that Matilda and her husband were there as well. Godfrey had written to congratulate Gregory on his election to the Papacy, and through Matilda's influence he had been made General of the Church's forces. It was hoped in this way to secure his entire allegiance to the Papacy, and it is possible, therefore, that he journeyed with his wife to Rome in order to be present at Gregory's consecration.

In letters to Hugo, abbot of Cluny, his old master and lifelong friend, to the Duchess Beatrice and others, Gregory speaks of his hesitancy in accepting the Pontificate. Yet at the same time he must have felt within himself that there was no other man who at this critical

[1] See Bonitho, p. 656. [2] See Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 241 and note.

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B. GREGORIVS VII Soanensis, Bonitij filius, creat. die 23. Aprilis ann. 1073.
Sedit an. 12. mens. 1. Obijt die 24. Maij
an. 1085. Vac Sed. an. 1.

GREGORY VII

period could have so adequately filled that high office. Whilst determined in every possible manner to carry on the work of his predecessors, and assert the supremacy of the Church, and its right to rule absolutely with regard to its own government, unfettered by King or Emperor, Gregory seems to have been moved by no personal feeling of animosity towards Henry, in spite of his past conduct. In fact, he seems anxious to conciliate the young King, to draw him into the right way by gentle means, and he was evidently very desirous that ecclesiastical difficulties should be settled in a peaceful manner.

He thus writes of him to the young Duke Godfrey, in answer to the congratulatory letter already referred to :— 'Touching the King,' he says, 'learn all our thought, and all our wish. Nobody, we believe, has more care than ourselves for his glory, present and future, nor desires it with more fervour. For it is our wish, at the first favourable moment, to express to him by our legates, the affection and the vigilance of a father on those subjects which seem to us to affect the prosperity of the Church, and the honour of the throne. If he listens to us, we will have the same joy of his salvation as of our own ; and he can certainly only work out his salvation by confiding himself to our counsels and in the way of justice. But if (which we fervently hope will not be the case) he returns us hate for our love, and if, not recognising the justice of God, he repays only with contempt the great honour he has received, the sentence, " Cursed be the man who keepeth back his sword from blood," will not fall on us, thanks to God. For it is not permitted to us to sacrifice the law of God to personal considerations, and to quit the path of justice for human favours ; the

Apostle says: "If I would please men, I should not be the servant of God." '[1]

And in a letter addressed somewhat later to Beatrice and Matilda he says:[2] 'Our wish with regard to the King, as you have already seen from our letters, is to send him pious men, whose voice may lead him back to the love of Holy Church, his mother, and who will serve to instruct and to transform him, so that he may become worthy to receive the Empire. But if, contrary to our wish, he disdains to listen to us, we cannot, neither do we dare, turn from the Roman Church, our mother, who has nourished us, and has often raised up for herself other children from the very blood of her sons. And it is certainly a better way for us to resist Henry in defending the truth for his own salvation, even to the pouring out of our own blood, than, in order to please him, to consent to iniquity and to fall with him into the abyss.'

And Gregory remained true to these sentiments in his subsequent dealings with the Emperor.

Shortly after the ceremony of consecration in Rome, Gregory made a tour in the south of Italy. Of late years there had been a tendency on the part of the Papacy to show some favour to the heads of the Longobard principalities not yet entirely overpowered by the Normans. Now Gregory had entered into friendly relations with Landulf of Beneventum and Gisulf of Salerno. This aroused Robert Guiscard's suspicions, so that when summoned by the Pope to come and do him homage at Beneventum, he declined to enter the town, and invited Gregory to meet him in his own camp. This the Pope refused to do, and Guiscard then took his departure.

[1] *Reg.*, i. 9 (6th May 1073). See Don Tosti, pp. 133-134.
[2] *Reg.*, i. 11.

Gregory, therefore, was all the more anxious to bind the other princes to him. He made a treaty with Gisulf of Salerno, and with Landulf of Beneventum, who had once been driven from his duchy, then reinstated, then expelled again, and was now restored more or less as a vassal of the Holy See, while Richard of Capua also entered the alliance. These princes pledged themselves to defend the Pope and the Papal territory, and never to invest any one with Church benefices without the Pope's sanction. In addition to the ordinary oath of fealty which Richard took, there was added a curious clause, evidently on account of Gregory's anxiety to take every precaution against Henry's tampering with the Papal vassals: 'As to the King Henry,' said Richard, 'I will swear fealty to him, according to the counsel I receive from thee, or thy successors, and always excepting my fealty to the Roman Church.'

Gregory, pursuing his idea of an amicable settlement with regard to the much-vexed question of investitures, and in the hopes that Henry might through persuasion be induced to yield, was anxious to hold an important council in Rome, where all ecclesiastical differences then vexing the Church should be most fully discussed. With a view to this he proceeded to summon various prelates of the Church, amongst them Raynald of Como, the Empress Agnes's spiritual adviser; the Empress herself, Beatrice and Matilda, the Duke Rudolf of Suabia, Henry's brother-in-law, and one of his most powerful vassals, and many other princes.

At this time Henry's subjects in Saxony were giving him so much trouble that for the moment he had little leisure to assert himself about the right of investitures. For years the Saxons had felt themselves ill used, and

Henry had found them amongst the most rebellious of all his people. They resented his setting over them his Suabian favourites. The number of castles he had built, ostensibly as fortresses against the incursions of Danes, Wends, and Poles, was another cause of offence, and it was only too true that the soldiers and their commanders had treated the natives very cruelly and exercised great tyranny over them, and in many respects the King's conduct towards them had been harsh and overbearing. The peasantry had been driven to a state of fury at the wrongs they had suffered, the nobles wished to reinstate their rightful Duke, Magnus, who was detained a prisoner by Henry, and they were also indignant at the King for keeping the duchy in his own hands. Some of the other princes joined them, for to many the King had given such offence, both by his attitude towards them personally, and by his irregular life, that there was some talk of deposing him. To these suggestions two of his nobles in particular, Berthold of Carinthia and Rudolf of Suabia, listened eagerly, though outwardly they held with the King! Rudolf had married Queen Bertha's sister, was a very ambitious man, and a professed partisan of Church reform. Perhaps he was not without hopes that he might succeed his brother-in-law and King. Henry, driven to desperation, had retired to his castle of the Harzburg, which the Saxons at once besieged. From there he had escaped to the monastery of Hersfeld, and summoning a council, he threw himself at the feet of his nobles, professed the greatest contrition for his misdoings, and promised to amend his ways. It was at this time that he addressed a letter to Gregory, the tenor of which greatly pleased the Pope.

'Guilty and unhappy we are,' he says, 'partly through

the errors of a misguided youth, partly by the liberty given us through absolute power, partly through the deceit of those whose advice we have too easily followed, we have sinned before Heaven and before you, and we are no longer worthy of the name of your son, for not only have we invaded ecclesiastical territory, but we have sometimes sold the very churches to unworthy men, impregnated with the poison of simony.' [1]

The Saxons meanwhile had been joined by the Thuringians, and were rapidly demolishing the hated fortresses of the King, so that Henry's crown really seemed in danger.

All this time Duke Godfrey and his wife had evidently not arrived at any permanent understanding, though an effort had been made to heal the breach between them. If we can trust the story of the casket, Godfrey had come to Italy in a conciliatory frame of mind; Beatrice had urged her daughter to try and reconcile herself with her husband, and for the time Godfrey had, no doubt, seemed willing to adopt Matilda's ecclesiastical views. The Pope, as we have already seen, had written him a very cordial letter, and a meeting must have taken place between these two, possibly at the time of the consecration ceremony. It seems likely that Godfrey then promised that, if the need arose, he would at any time return to Italy with sufficient troops to fight for the Church, and he would lead the Papal forces to battle. He also pledged himself to further a better understanding with King Henry. In return for these services the Pope had promised to reward the young Duke of Lorraine with the lordship of Sardinia, once the Papacy's claims

[1] Quoted by Don Tosti, pp. 140, 141, from Mansi's collection, vol. xx. p. 35.

to that island were established. Thus did Gregory hope to win over Matilda's husband to the Papal cause, and thus did matters stand when Godfrey left Italy. He had established a right to the joint government of his wife's estates, as can be seen from many a document of this period, but with regard to Matilda herself he had gained very little, if anything, by his Italian journey. Outwardly harmony reigned, and it would seem likely that Beatrice and Matilda accompanied him almost to the foot of the Alps, for we have evidence that early in August they were in Verona (see Chap. VII. and Appendix), and there is a parchment[1] extant confirming another donation of Matilda's (dated August 18, at Marengo) in which she gives some lands to a convent in Parma ' with the consent of Duke Godfrey, my husband.' We believe that this is the only document of Matilda's in which such a phrase occurs, and the mention of Godfrey in this connection would almost seem to imply that the husband and wife were then, or had recently been, together.

Embittered by his wife's refusal to return with him to Lorraine, and believing that she had been instigated by the Pope in this matter, Godfrey's interests in Italian concerns rapidly diminished. If we can read between the lines of the vague accounts that have been handed down to us, we may surmise that the personal disagreements of this unhappy couple were greatly aggravated by the political occurrences of the times, and it was not Gregory's influence working upon Matilda that alone caused their final separation, as the later German critics would have us believe. We can gather from the Pope's

[1] The original of this document is to be seen in the Public Library at Parma, together with a later copy.

letters at this period that Matilda was in a miserable frame of mind, that she wished to leave the world and retire into a cloister, that her religious zeal caused her in time to regard her marriage as a sin—probably on the score of consanguinity, since she and Godfrey were cousins within the prohibited degree—and that Gregory was the confidant of her troubles. But beyond the fact that he counselled her in her religious exercises, that he restrained her fervour and did not approve of her desire for the conventual life, it is difficult to speak with any degree of certainty. Matilda may have been temporarily encouraged by the Pope to maintain the separation between her husband and herself, for Gregory felt very keenly Godfrey's indifference to Papal interests, as is evidenced by the sharp rebuke conveyed in the letter dated April 7, 1074. The Pope tells Godfrey he has fallen away like so many others and has not kept his word; his father before him promised much to the Church and did but little. 'Where are the soldiers that thou hast promised for the defence of Peter? Since thou hast not accomplished that which thou promisedst to the blessed Peter, we who are his Vicar, although unworthy, do not bind thee to any engagement except to watch over thy soul, as becomes a Christian.' [1]

It was not only against Norman encroachments that the Pope had wished to direct the armed forces promised by the young Duke of Lorraine. He had hoped they would also take part in a great expedition against the infidels, a project which he had very much at heart—a foreshadowing, in fact, of a great crusade. Of this we shall hear more later. Hence the keenness of his disappointment at Godfrey's defection. But when

[1] *Reg.*, vol. i. p. 72 (7th April 1074).

we consider the meagreness of the details that have reached us, and that we have only the guarded expressions employed by Gregory in his letters with regard to Matilda's difficulties to guide us in forming an opinion, and ignorant as we are of the more intimate messages conveyed verbally by a confidential messenger, to whom allusions are made in some of the letters, we realise that there is too little reliable information at hand to enable any one to speak with certainty as to whether the great Countess was unduly influenced by the Pope in her attitude towards her husband, and we doubt if Gregory had any definite plan of keeping Matilda and Godfrey permanently apart—rather it would seem that political events conspired with Matilda's inclinations towards this end.

Once north of the Alps Godfrey's energies were directed to helping his liege lord of Germany in his Saxon troubles, and when the Pope's appeal reached him, he found himself unable to divide his forces, or to quit the campaign upon which he had already embarked. It was doubtless a difficult question to decide—or would have been to many a warrior, but the fact that Godfrey did not hold a given promise as a matter of any great seriousness is evinced several times in his career.

At this point it may be well to speak of a curious confusion with regard to Matilda that has arisen in the minds of some historians.[1] More than one of them has declared that her second husband was Azzo d'Este, and from him she obtained a divorce on the grounds of consanguinity, and they quote one of Gregory's letters in which Matilda's name is mentioned in connection with this divorce. Now Pope Gregory in 1074 wrote to

[1] Mario Equicola, *History of Mantua*, p. 26; also Mellini, p. 48 *et seq.*

William, Bishop of Pavia, and Heribert, Bishop of Modena, asking for particulars of this demand for a divorce on the part of Matilda, and the reply was sent in 1075. And in another letter Gregory, writing to Countess Matilda and her mother, begs them to offer every security to Azzo d'Este, who is to pass through their states on his way to Rome to give reasons for his marriage. Had he been married to Matilda of Tuscany, the Great Countess, this would hardly have occurred. Moreover, Godfrey 'il Gobbo' was still alive in 1074, a fact which these historians have overlooked.

Fiorentini[1] and Vedriani both tell us that there was another Matilda who is sometimes called Countess, sister of William, Bishop of Pavia, who married Azzo d'Este, and it is this lady that Dal Pozzo and others have confused with 'la gran donna d'Italia,' partly through carelessness, and partly perhaps through the difficulty of ascertaining exact dates in those early times.

It was not until 1074 that Gregory was able to arrange for that council upon which he had built so much, which was to re-establish the Christian faith in all its liberty. Rudolf of Suabia dared not come, political affairs detaining him in his own country, and all the Lombard prelates and the dissenting bishops of Germany were conspicuous by their absence. On the other hand, there was a great assembly of Italian dignitaries, lay and sacerdotal, all the lords of Italy were there, the Empress Agnes, Beatrice, and Matilda.

When the Pope entered the council-chamber, he was greeted with shouts on all sides, 'Long life to Pope Gregory.' He who for twenty-five years had been the real director of the Papacy, and was now its head, had

[1] See also Muratori, *Antichità Estensi*, vol. i. pp. 22, 23.

lost nothing of his youthful ardour or vigour, and he bore his sixty years lightly.

Every act of this council served but to carry on the work he had begun. Many archbishops, bishops, and priests were forthwith excommunicated, for acts of simony or for living in the married state, for Gregory was determined to put an end to these abuses at all costs. Robert Guiscard was struck with anathema, together with all his followers, for sacrilegiously invading the Papal territories; and Philip I. of France was threatened with excommunication if he could not justify his conduct to the Papal nuncio, and give satisfactory assurances that he would amend his ways.

The council then proceeded to pronounce decrees against all those in general who had purchased their offices, and the laity were forbidden to receive their administrations, or to hold any intercourse with him whatsoever.

But the most important decree of this synod directly attacked the much-vexed question of investitures. For it expressly declared that investiture by lay hands was contrary to the canons of the Church, and would henceforth be dealt with accordingly. It was agreed that the Empress Agnes and Beatrice of Tuscany should accompany the Papal legates to Germany bearing Gregory's decrees to the King, and that they should try and see whether it were possible to arrive at an amicable settlement of the differences about investitures, for Gregory was unyielding in this matter, and at the council clearly manifested that spirit of determination which dominated his life, that no human force should prevent him from carrying out the reforms in the Church which he considered absolutely essential to her well-being in the present, and her continuity in the future.

CHAPTER X

The Abbot of St. Hubert determines to journey to Rome in company with the Bishop of Metz, and lay his cause before the Pope—They are entertained in Pisa by Beatrice and Matilda, and Abbot Dietrich is given letters to the Pope—Gregory receives him and sends him away with power to act against Duke Godfrey—Godfrey attempts a reconciliation with Matilda—The plot against the Pope's life in Santa Maria Maggiore is unsuccessful—Gregory is made prisoner, but is released on the following day—Death of Godfrey in February 1076, and of Beatrice in April 1076—Matilda has henceforth to stand alone—Henry IV. is reproved by the Pope for his evil conduct—Retaliates by commanding the Pope to vacate the Chair of Peter, and sends an envoy to Rome with an insolent letter to Gregory—Gregory excommunicates him and many German bishops—Effect of this on Henry's subjects, who declare he must have the sentence of excommunication removed, or lose his kingdom. The excommunicated bishops hasten across the Alps to ask for absolution—Henry departs from Spires, halts at Besançon for Christmas, and finally, with great difficulty, crosses the Alps in the winter of 1076-1077.

IN the spring of 1074 another incident occurred to alienate Matilda and her husband still further—an incident which shows us, too, how very widely apart were their views, and how very little value Godfrey attached to a given promise.

Godfrey had now entirely gone over to the imperial party, and had taken part with Henry in the Saxon campaign, as we have already seen. His quarrel with the Abbot Dietrich over his father's bequest to the abbey was still maintained, for upon his return the monks had

put in a claim for the lands and the treasure the elder Godfrey had bequeathed to them, and the young duke, whilst not denying the obligation, tried to reduce the amount of it. He refused to endow the abbey with all the promised territory, nor would he give the whole of the treasure, and, as we know, he had wrested from the abbot the ivory casket, which he had forthwith returned to Matilda. The abbot had borne this treatment in silence until he heard of Hildebrand's election to the Papacy. Realising what a zealous advocate the Church had acquired in the new Pope, he determined to go to Rome and lay the whole case before him. He was accompanied on his journey by the Bishop of Metz, and passing through Tuscany, they halted at the ancient town of Luna. Here a messenger from Beatrice met them. She had heard what illustrious wayfarers were on the road, and had sent, in her own name and in that of her daughter, to beg them to come to Pisa and celebrate the Easter festival at the court they were holding there.

The two travellers accepted this invitation with gladness, and knowing how much of the Pope's friendship their prospective hostesses enjoyed, they hastened on to Pisa, and were received with great favour at the palace.

The bishop was asked to celebrate high mass in the chapel, but the good abbot, overcome with the magnificence of the two princesses and the splendours of their court, hid himself in the crowd with his chaplains, and chanted the mass to himself in a whisper.

Matilda, however, recognised him amongst the crowd, and beckoned to him to come and take the place reserved for him in the choir.

When the service was concluded, Matilda sent for the abbot and questioned him closely as to his mission to

Rome and the subject of his complaint against Duke Godfrey, her husband. She was much struck with the moderation he displayed even in his accusations, and advising him to lay the whole case before the Holy Father, she gave him letters of recommendation from herself, and exhorted him to lay them in the Pope's hands. The abbot, much cheered by the kindness of the Tuscan princess, continued his journey, and upon arriving in Rome he handed in his letters. He was received most graciously by the Pope, and his case was listened to with every courtesy. Upon his departure he was given a bull which placed under the safe keeping of the Holy See all the goods, territories, and possessions of the abbey of St. Hubert, present or to come, and all the donations which had been, or were to be, made to it; and under pain of anathema any one who should dare to appropriate them.

It is said that the good abbot, in a spirit of Christian peace and charity, had begged to be relieved from the obligation of claiming the legacy made by Duke Godfrey, but the Pope would hear none of this, and he further placed in the abbot's hands two briefs, one to the Bishop of Cologne and the other to the Bishop of Liège, engaging them to force Godfrey, either by the weight of their counsel or by the terror of anathema, to fulfil the undertaking made by his father.

The prelates succeeded in carrying out the Pope's injunctions, inasmuch as the lands were handed over to the abbey; the duke yielded with an evil grace, greatly incensed doubtless, that Matilda should have taken the part of the abbot against him in this difference.

Yet in the following year, when Henry, anxious to come to some agreement with the Pope on ecclesiastical

matters, sent an embassy to the Tuscan court begging his kinswomen to act as mediators, Godfrey took the opportunity of employing one of the ambassadors to plead his cause, and see if a reconciliation could not be effected between himself and his wife. Henry, however, did not manage to come to any agreement with Gregory, and as Godfrey had now thrown in his lot entirely with the King, Matilda and Beatrice hesitated to accept his advances, or to be reconciled ; and at the end of the year an incident occurred which must have widened still further the breach between husband and wife. For a terrible attempt was made on the Pope's life. The chief actors in the plot were Cardinal Hugues le Blanc, Gregory's erstwhile admirer, who had now joined the ranks of his enemies, and Cencius, son of the Prefect of Rome, whose name has already been mentioned in connection with Cadalous. After the final discomfiture of the antipope, Cencius had for a time conducted himself as a worthy Roman citizen. Then he was discovered in an attempt to rob the Church of some property, and was forced by Gregory to restore his ill-gotten gains, and from that moment he became an avowed disturber of the peace. He built a tower close to the bridge over the Tiber leading to St. Peter's, and here, with many a deed of violence, he robbed the passers-by under pretence of levying toll. This time his own father was the means of bringing him to justice, and he was imprisoned and condemned to death.

Now it happened that when this occurred Matilda was in Rome in order to attend the Lenten synod (February 1075), and she pleaded so effectually for Cencius's life that, upon solemn promise of amendment, he was pardoned by the Pope and set at liberty. Instead of gratitude for

this act of mercy, Cencius evinced the greatest hatred towards his benefactors and was secretly plotting to secure the Pope's person.[1] Cardinal Hugues was only too willing to foster this animosity, and according to one account it seems probable that the conspirators received help and approval from the German court.

At length the moment was deemed ripe for action. At midnight on Christmas Eve (1075) Gregory was celebrating mass at Santa Maria Maggiore in the Chapel of the Manger; the huge basilica was practically deserted and very few worshippers were present, for a terrible storm was raging over the city. The most solemn part of the service had just been completed, and the faithful knelt in silent adoration. Suddenly their devotions were interrupted by loud cries from without, and a body of armed men rushed into the chapel. Bursting through the chancel gates, they roughly seized hold of the Pope and with the utmost violence dragged him down the steps into the body of the church and out through the great eastern door, where the rest of their accomplices awaited them. Here he was bound, placed on a horse, and carried off to a strong tower near the Pantheon, held at that time by Cencius and his disaffected band.

Not a sound, not a cry escaped Gregory, though he was severely wounded on the forehead and had been dragged down the church by his hair. He bore all these indignities with the greatest fortitude. When the news was bruited abroad that the Holy Father had been seized and roughly treated, and his life threatened, Rome rose in a body. The tower was besieged by an angry multitude, battering-rams and instruments of war were brought out, and they threatened that not one of its

[1] Don Tosti, p. 164. See also Meyer von Knonau, vol. ii. p. 587.

inmates should be spared unless the Pope were at once set at liberty. Cencius had been awaiting an opportunity to send Gregory bound and a prisoner to Germany. Now that the tide had turned against him, he was in abject terror. As a preliminary measure of safety, he threw himself at the Pope's feet, and expressing the utmost sorrow for what he had done, besought his pardon. This Gregory granted him, on condition that, as penance, he should depart at once on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Gregory was then allowed to go free, and was received by the people with the greatest joy. Hardly was he released, than he insisted on returning to Santa Maria Maggiore to finish the interrupted mass, and thereafter blessing the people, he retired to the Lateran. This incident, coupled with the story of his undaunted courage in the face of his enemies, endeared him still more to his own followers, and brought over many waverers to his side. Cencius had fled the city with his wife and family, and taking up his abode in a small fortified town in the Campagna, he was able to harry the Church's lands with impunity. He opened up negotiations with Guibert of Ravenna and Cardinal Hugues, and was regarded by them as a staunch ally. The renegade cardinal repaired to Ravenna to confer with Guibert, and then hastened over the Alps to take counsel with all the disaffected clergy in Germany. He reached Worms in time to play an important rôle at that memorable assembly (January 24, 1076).

The news of the attempt on the Pope's life gradually spread outside Rome, and doubtless, when it reached the ears of the Tuscan princesses, they were filled with horror. It may be that this news brought Matilda to a decision. She had been hesitating for some time whether to accede

to Godfrey's request and again enter into some sort of relation with her absent husband, and now to realise that Godfrey should be capable of siding with those who countenanced so infamous a deed, may have given the finishing touch to her resolution, and from that time forth no word was interchanged between the unhappy husband and wife. Godfrey never returned to Italy after 1074, and in February 1076 he was foully murdered at Antwerp. He remained unreconciled with Matilda to the last, and after his one unsuccessful effort to bring about an understanding, no further communication appears to have taken place between them. We wonder if Matilda repented of her decision when the news of her husband's death reached her? At all events her heart was softened after his death, and so much of compassion she felt for him that she begged Gregory to pray for the peace of his soul.

On the 18th of April of this same year, 1076, Beatrice, whose health had long been failing, passed out of this life, at Pisa, the city she loved so well. Her death was a source of bitter grief to Matilda, and a great loss to Italy.

Beatrice, a most devout woman, although devoted to Holy Church and to the land of her adoption, never forgot her kinsfolk beyond the Alps. Her relationship with Henry made it only natural that she should act as mediator between the Emperor and the Pope, and she was always more than willing to undertake this thankless task, and did her utmost to soften and move Henry to a better way of living.[1] Her efforts to bring about a better understanding between the Pope and King are thus described by Domnizo :—' The King lived on the other side of the mountains, the Pope abode in Rome ; a legate

[1] See Muratori, *Annali*, vol. vi. p. 210.

with swiftness transmitted all news to both of them, and between them stood as mediator the renowned mother of Matilda, who, desirous of seeing a bloodless peace re-established in all the kingdom, solicited the King to agree with the pious Pontiff, and supplicated the Pope to love the King' (lib. I. cap. xix.). The long journey Beatrice had taken in 1074 into Germany was certainly a proof of her desire for peace. Henry was not insensible to her goodness, and always wrote of her with great affection.

It may be that with her dying breath she commended this task of mediation to Matilda; at the same time, without doubt, she admonished her daughter to continue in her devotion to the Roman See, and in all things and all ways to serve the Holy Father. And so she passed away, full of a great charity to all mankind, beloved of high and low. Her remains rested for a while within the Cathedral of Pisa, then were removed outside the great façade, and finally were deposited in that beautiful sarcophagus, carved ages ago for some pagan hero with the story of Hippolytus and Phædra. As we read her epitaph, chosen probably by herself, we seem to catch a glimpse of the simplicity of a truly great spirit:

'Quamuis peccatrix sum Domna vocata Beatrix,
In tumulo missa iaceo quae Comitissa.'

('Although a sinner, I was called Lady Beatrice, I, a Countess, now lie in this tomb.')

From henceforth Matilda stood alone in the world; no human bonds or earthly affections prevented her from giving her whole life undivided and unstintingly to the Church. Her position at this time must have been unique in the history of Italy, unique in the history of the world. A woman, still comparatively young, in the zenith of her beauty and power, under tutelage to no

TOMB OF BEATRICE AT PISA

male relation, absolutely free, in fact, in a manner unprecedented in her epoch, with unbounded riches, unnumbered vassals at her command, and nearly the half of Italy under her sway. On the one hand, she had received the training of a warrior; on the other, there had been the strict discipline imposed on her by the Church.

Somewhat obscured by the history of later times, more positive to us since there are more ample details to hand concerning them, blurred by the mists of ages past since her days, the radiant figure of Matilda shone forth refulgent in the centuries that immediately followed her own. Painter and poet depicted her. Dante has given her to us as a beautiful young girl beside the waters of Lethe—she might also have been represented side by side with the warrior saints of Paradise. Cimabue, it is said, painted her as a warrior maiden, leading a horse with one hand, and holding a pomegranate in the other, symbolic alike of her prowess and her purity.

Various princes sought her hand in marriage when the period of her mourning was at an end. Robert, eldest son of William the Conqueror, is mentioned later amongst her suitors,[1] and the Emperor of Constantinople, 'who sent her rare gifts of robes and precious jewels.'[2] But to none of these would she listen. To the Church and to the Church alone she dedicated her life, until the time came when a later Pope urged upon her a marriage of policy, of which we shall speak hereafter.

Very soon after the death of her mother, Matilda was called upon to forget her own personal sorrow in the greater troubles which menaced Italy. The previous winter Henry had succeeded in mastering the Saxons,

[1] Muratori, *Annali*, vol. vi. under year 1088, also *Antichità Estensi*, vol. i. p. 16.

[2] Luchino, p. 5.

and encouraged by his victories, he felt more at liberty to defy the Pope. In direct contradiction to the submission indicated in his letters, he had persisted in retaining his evil counsellors, and without consulting Gregory he had appointed two of his favourites to the vacant sees of Milan, Fermo and Spoleto respectively. Gregory, tired of the King's disloyalty to his word, had despatched nuncios to the court bearing with them a grave letter of admonition, dated 8th December 1075, and a still severer message: 'Unless before the next Lenten synod the King dismissed his evil companions and amended his conduct, he would be cut off from all communion with the Church.' This message aroused still further the spirit of defiance in Henry, for after treating the Pope's legates to great indignities, he summoned a council at Worms on Septuagesima Sunday, January 24, 1076, to depose the Pope. At this council, Hugues le Blanc, Gregory's former friend and supporter, *now*, through his defalcations, an unfrocked priest and ex-cardinal, actually accused Gregory of licentiousness, simony, and necromancy.[1] Although it was easily seen that these accusations were prompted by malice and a desire for revenge, they were eagerly seized upon by Henry as a justification for his actions against the Pope. Most of the German prelates agreed to Gregory's deposition, and a document was drawn up which all signed, renouncing their oath of obedience to him, and swearing no more to call him sovereign Pontiff. To this there was added a letter, in Henry's name, couched in most insulting terms. It was agreed to lay the decisions of this council before an Italian assembly of bishops in Lombardy and then forward them to Rome, and afterwards a new Pope was

[1] Villemain, vol. ii. p. 44; Milman, book VII. chap. ii.

to be chosen by the King. Henry then wrote another insolent letter of a more private nature to the Pope, and despatched a missive to the Roman people.

The Lombard prelates, the disaffected bishops of Ravenna and Ancona, two of Henry's greatest supporters, were advised of these proceedings. Overjoyed at the prospect of humiliating Gregory, they rapidly spread the news through the northern towns, and from Piacenza, where Henry's envoys had attended the Lombard synod and had caused to be confirmed the decision of the Council of Worms, Roland, a cleric of Parma, was despatched to Rome to bear these insolent letters to Gregory. Travelling hastily day and night, he reached Rome in time for a Lateran council Gregory had convened on February 21st. Abruptly entering the assembly, he thus addressed the Pope: 'My master and all the Italian bishops, together with those on the other side of the Alps, command you at once to vacate that seat which you cannot hold without their sanction.' Then turning to the clergy, he said: 'Brothers, the King calls you to his presence for the approaching feast of Pentecost, when he will give you a new Pope in place of this voracious wolf.' At these audacious words there was a burst of fury from the assembly; it seemed to them blasphemy that a low cleric should dare to thus address Christ's Vicar. Many swords were drawn, and a rush was made at Roland, who narrowly escaped being run through. Gregory, however, insisted he should be spared, and with great calmness and dignity dismissed the assembly for that day. On the following morning Gregory read aloud to the council the letter that Henry had sent, addressed to 'Hildebrand, false monk and priest,' a letter unworthy of a king, full of false accusations of simony, magic,

ferocity, tyranny, and so forth, coupled with the outrageous command to vacate the Chair of St. Peter which he had usurped.[1] 'With one voice the bishops cried that Henry should be cut off from the body of Christ as an unclean member, a worker of scandal amongst the faithful.' After a short imposing silence Gregory lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed, calling the saints to witness that he had not usurped the governorship of the Church, nor had he looked upon his elevation to the Holy See as a conquest, but as a sacred duty. Then solemnly and slowly he pronounced the sentence of excommunication on Henry, relieving all Christians of their oath of fealty to him, and forbidding any to obey him as king. Further, Gregory anathematised all of the bishops, German and Lombard, who had taken part in the Council of Worms, and suspended them from all episcopal functions. To those who had subscribed to the heresies under constraint, or who were willing to repent and recant, he offered absolution under certain conditions. They should be pardoned if they came in person to demand it, or if they sent satisfactory envoys before the feast of St. Peter. Otherwise there remained no hope for them. A great many historians think that both Beatrice and Matilda were present at this most memorable council.

Gregory thereupon addressed a letter to the German princes explaining the reason that had caused him to take this severe step against their King. North of the Alps the effect of the excommunication sentence made itself felt at once. To the disaffected amongst Henry's subjects it gave encouragement to fresh rebellion, and

[1] This letter is to be found in the Codex Udalrici 47, January 24, 1076 (*Monumenta Bambergensia*, Jaffé, vol. v.). The concluding words are as follows:—'Ego Heinricus Dei gratia rex cum omnibus episcopis nostris tib dicimus Descende, descende per secula dampnande.'

the most timid of those who were still faithful to him fell away, for fear the Pope's curse should overtake them likewise. The tide had turned, and on all sides Henry was made to feel the bitterness of desertion and defiance. Rudolf of Suabia set a bad example in this respect by freeing the Saxon chiefs made prisoners in the war, whom Henry had committed to his charge. Forthwith in Saxony, Bavaria, and Suabia an orderly campaign was organised. Seeing the general anarchy, many bishops and chiefs sent deputies to Rome begging the Pope to come to Germany and appoint a new ruler over them, since on all sides disorder and disobedience prevailed. After a long conference held in October at Tribur on the Rhine,[1] the German lords made known to Henry that they had asked the Pope to celebrate the approaching Feast of the Purification at Augsburg, there to hear their accusations, to absolve or to condemn him. They declared that unless Henry caused the sentence of excommunication to be raised, before the anniversary of the day upon which it had been pronounced, he must fall for ever from his kingdom.[2] On the other hand, if he

[1] There is a possibility that, during the summer of 1076, Matilda paid a visit to Lorraine in order to put in a claim for some of her dead husband's lands. It is known that she wished to bestow the fiefs of Verdun, Stenay and Mosay upon his cousin Albert of Namur, and begged Bishop Dietrich of Verdun to act on her behalf in this matter, but whether this was done personally or by letter has not been proved. (The legend of Matilda's ring is referable to this period. See Appendix A.)

The probability of this northern journey of Matilda's would fall in well with the theory advanced of late years, that she attended the diet of Tribur, and acted in conjunction with the Empress Agnes and Hugo, abbot of Cluny, as mediator between the princes and their disgraced sovereign, and that mainly owing to their joint representations the proposed Council of Augsburg was insisted upon. A passage in a contemporary writer, Arnulf of Milan, alluding to a great conference such as the one held at Tribur, is quoted in corroboration of this theory.

[2] There was naturally no precedent for judging an excommunicated king,

obtained this grace, and showed sincere repentance and amendment, they would return to their allegiance, provided always the Pope approved of this measure. They would also undertake to render the King all assistance in his journey to Rome for the imperial coronation, and they would help him to drive the Normans out of Italy; but in the meantime he was to remain at Spires, more or less as a prisoner of state, with only a small band of retainers, especially chosen by the princes. They demanded further that he should at once send a letter of contrition and submission to the Pope, and also beg him to come to Augsburg. Henry yielded in an abject manner. He acknowledged the Pope's right to excommunicate him, and his own guilt in daring to assume that he had the right to depose the Pope. He further confessed that he had assumed a false position with regard to the nobles, for he had no royal rights independent of those they granted him, and he promised that if he succeeded in obtaining absolution and recovering his kingdom, and that if subsequently the crown of Empire were bestowed upon him, he would remember both as King and Emperor that these rights were his only by the grace of God, and the favour of the Pope and the princes of the realm.

As regards the letter to the Pope, Henry contrived to alter its substance, and implored Gregory to grant him an interview in Rome. Gregory refused this interview, but consented to the Augsburg conference as suggested

but the princes had based their decision upon the accepted civil laws, which declared that if a man should remain under the ban of the empire for longer than one year, he would forfeit the rights over his estates. See Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 390 and notes, p. 1146, where it is explained that these were probably the *leges palatinæ* referred to by Lambert, not necessarily laws reduced to a written code.

by the German princes. Henry, driven desperate by this refusal, dreading the extreme humiliation of appearing as a guilty man and a penitent before all his German vassals, in deadly fear of losing both Empire and Kingdom, resolved to undertake the perilous journey into Italy and to implore in person to be released from the ban of excommunication. He communicated with Matilda and Hugo, abbot of Cluny, his godfather, urging both of them to intercede for him with the Pope. He did not tell Matilda that he contemplated an immediate journey, but he begged the friendly abbot to go himself and plead for him.

At this time many bishops and temporal lords were hastening over the Alps to rid themselves of the burden of anathema. Henry may have been moved by their example, but the difficulties in his way were even greater than theirs. To such a state of penury was he reduced that he had actually to beg for the necessary means for making the journey from some of his subjects, and they, touched by their King's wretchedness, provided him with money. A few days before Christmas, therefore, Henry left Spires, accompanied by a few faithful followers, his wife and infant son. Bertha, whom the King had tried to repudiate in the days of his prosperity, never left his side now that evil times had befallen him, and on her he leant for comfort and for aid.

The little band journeyed to Upper Burgundy and celebrated Christmas at Besançon with Count William, a nephew of the King's mother. It had been agreed before they started that they should try and reach Italy by one of the more eastern passes, since all the nearer and less difficult ones were held by Henry's rebellious vassals. Shortly after the Christmas festival they crossed

the Rhone near Geneva, and entering the territory of Adelaide of Susa, Bertha's mother, they effected a meeting with her at some small place, possibly Chênes.[1] Allusion has already been made to the great lady of Turin in a previous chapter. She was a most devoted admirer of Gregory, and a friend of Matilda. Her other daughter was married to Rudolf of Suabia, Henry's rival, therefore she was not disposed, for the time being, to look with particular favour upon Bertha's husband. The fugitive King was eager to ensure a safe passage across the mountains for himself and for his companions, and it would appear that Adelaide deemed the moment opportune to beg for the rights over certain bishoprics which she had long coveted. Henry is said to have compromised by offering her a tract of land contiguous to her own estates, providing, of course, that he succeeded in regaining his kingly rights to dispose of territory in this manner, The bargain, whatever its nature, having been concluded, Adelaide seems to have been willing to help in every possible way. Perhaps the promised addition to her possessions held some very special value in her eyes, or it may be that she was really touched by the tears and sufferings of her daughter, for eventually she accompanied these unfortunate travellers on their perilous journey, and undertook later to plead for Henry with the Pope. Doubtless her presence facilitated

[1] 'In locum qui Civis (or Ciuis) dicitur,' writes Lambert of Hersfeld. The name has been variously interpreted as Vevay, Civasco, Chivasso, or even Mt. Cenis. But it would seem as if a place or town were specially indicated, and since we know where it was that Henry crossed the Rhone, and it is most probable that he traversed the Alps by way of the Mt. Cenis, we are inclined to think that Giesebrecht's surmise is correct, and that Chênes, a village not very far from Geneva, is intended here (Giesebrecht, vol. ii. p. 1147); Lambert, an. 1076, p. 219 (*Chron. rer. Germ.*).

their journey, for none of her vassals could well refuse the King all possible help when their liege lady was in his company.

In the times with which we are now dealing, the passage over the Alps was a very different matter to what it is nowadays. The old Roman roads had disappeared across many of the passes, but in some cases a track was kept open for pilgrims, who, journeying mostly on foot, would choose one of the easiest ways ; in winter, however, the best of these were mostly impracticable. In this winter certainly, none but a king, outcast and wretched, deserted by all save a faithful few, and a most tender wife, none but a man in mortal fear lest worse ills should befall him, would have dreamed of attempting such a feat. For the winter of 1076-77 is noted by all the chroniclers as one of the severest on record. The Rhine and the Po were frozen over from November to April, and most of the vines were killed. In the Alps the severity of the storms and the quantity of snow and ice were extreme. Nothing, however, could deter Henry from the journey once undertaken, since only a few weeks remained to the fatal term ;—unless absolved before its expiration, the sentence of excommunication would be rendered final. So the little band started from the village where they had tarried with Adelaide to make arrangements, and rode to the foot of the mountains, and up the all but unrecognisable track as far as was feasible. They reached the summit tediously, the horses crawling, feeling their way in the teeth of the storm, and there they halted for the night, starting forth the next morning to encounter worse perils. For descent in that slippery region seemed well-nigh impossible with safety. The guides tried to lower the horses over some of the

steep slopes, but many of them became unmanageable and perished. Bertha, Adelaide, and the few women they had with them were covered over with bullocks' hides (sewn into them, some say), then placed on sledges hastily constructed of rough logs, and partly dragged, partly lowered over the worst places in the descent. After indescribable dangers, numerous falls, and narrow escapes, thanks to the courage and intrepidity of Adelaide's guides, they safely reached the foot of the mountains and arrived thus in Piedmont.

CHAPTER XI

Gregory leaves Rome and is escorted by Matilda and her troops through Lombardy—On hearing Henry is in Italy he turns aside to Canossa—Arrival of excommunicated bishops and laymen—They receive pardon—Gregory at Canossa—Henry's arrival—Penitence and reconciliation with the Pope—Henry's plot to entrap Gregory frustrated by Matilda's man-at-arms—Gregory remains in Matilda's strongholds throughout the summer.

THE weight of years and his great activity were beginning to tell on Gregory, and a severe illness some months previously had weakened his iron frame. Yet in spite of these considerations, and in spite of the bitter wintry weather, he determined to fulfil his promise to the German princes, and to start upon the long and arduous journey to Augsburg. As he was making preparations, word was brought him that Matilda would meet him half-way and give him escort through the disaffected parts of Lombardy. A romantic writer[1] tells us that as far south as Viterbo 'a large detachment of her Tuscan cavalry, commanded by the barons of Spoleto, Amelia, Perugia, and Camerino, rode forth and formed themselves into a strong bodyguard for the Pope,' whilst Matilda left her mountain fastnesses with her special band of armed warriors, and met the whole company at Lucca. However this may be, we know that the Pope was in Lucca sometime at the

[1] Padre Bresciani in *Matilda di Canossa e Iolanda di Gronigen.*

end of 1076, or beginning of 1077,[1] but it would seem almost more probable that Matilda met the Pope in Florence, for we hear of him there on December 28th.[2] After this the accounts of his itinerary are conflicting—some writers say that he went as far north as Vercelli,[3] others that he actually reached Mantua. This last hypothesis seems the most likely, as he himself says that he was waiting the arrival of the escort promised by the German princes which was to guard him from Mantua over the mountains to Augsburg. While he halted there, tidings reached him that Henry had arrived in Italy, and this news was far from reassuring. Lombardy and Piedmont were in a state of ferment, and already the discontented bishops were assembling troops to support Henry, never doubting that he had come for purposes of war. Matilda, thoroughly distrustful of Henry, in spite of the protestations he had made so recently, urged the Pope to return with her to Canossa, where she would defend him if need arose, and where they would be entirely surrounded by her own people. Hugo, abbot of Cluny, who was returning from Rome, where he had been to receive absolution from the Pope on account of his intercourse with the excommunicated King, being anxious to keep his promise to Henry, willingly agreed to accompany Gregory. With an immense retinue, Matilda and her many guests left Lombardy behind them and reached Canossa in safety. They had not long been installed within the precincts of the castle, when, as forerunners of Henry, the German

[1] See *Vita Anselmi*, *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, vol. xii.

[2] *Reg. Pont. Rom.*, ed. Jaffé, vol. ii. p. 620.

[3] Bonitho (p. 672) tells us that Gregory of Vercelli informed the Pope that Henry had arrived in secret in Vercelli.

prelates and laymen whom Gregory had excommunicated began to arrive. Across the snowy Lombard plains, and up again into the mountainous region beyond Parma and Reggio, they followed on Gregory's tracks, until at Canossa's gates they stood awaiting the pontifical absolution.[1] In receiving them, Gregory said 'he would in no ways deny pardon to the really penitent, but they must wash themselves free from their sin with penance and tribulation.'

He ordered that the bishops should be put into separate cells, should have no communication with any one, and should only have a small supply of bread and water at nightfall. To the others, penances were ordered according to their age and strength. After several days they were sent forth with the apostolic pardon, forbidden, however, to hold any communication with the King.

Canossa, Matilda's greatest stronghold, beloved and fortified by her forefathers for so many generations, must have presented a remarkable appearance in those days. Its natural advantages in times of war were very great, standing as it did on a spur of the Apennines some fifteen hundred feet high, and dominating the outmost edge of the great Lombard plain. From its towers the view extended immeasurably. On a fine day no less than seven cities were visible,[2] and so well were the approaches to it contrived, that no great armed force could draw near without being instantly perceived.

In Matilda's days, when Canossa was at the height of its glorious epoch, it must have resembled a strongly

[1] We are told that Lieman, Archbishop of Bremen, the bishops of Naumburg, Osnabrück, Strassburg, Lausanne, and Bâle were at Canossa on January 28th. It is possible, therefore, that these may have preceded Henry in receiving absolution.

[2] Modena, Reggio, Parma, Guastalla, Carpi, Correggio, Mantua.

fortified little town rather than a castle so called. Upon its only accessible side the citadel was protected by three walls,[1] and at various points within these walls were the dwelling-places of the monks, immense accommodation for men-at-arms and all the instruments of war, stores, supplies, armouries innumerable, then the living part of the castle which Princes and Popes had inhabited, and towering above all the citadel itself, with the church dedicated to St. Apollonio close at hand. Matilda's own apartments and those appropriated to her guests must have been of very great extent. At this time, for instance, Canossa was able to entertain the Pope and his suite, Adelaide of Susa and her ladies, Amadeus, Adelaide's son, and the Marquis Azzo Adalberto of Este, with their respective followers, and 'many other princes of Italy,' as all the accounts say, who doubtless brought bodies of retainers with them. Then there were all Matilda's own people, and below in the monastery the monks and their prisoners the Germans, ecclesiastics and laymen. No wonder simple Domnizo the monk sings half boastfully of Canossa's glory, saying she had become a 'new Rome.'

Henry's arrival in Italy had been hailed with joy by all the schismatics, and they hastened to collect forces with which to uphold his cause. They were much disgusted

[1] The first wall protected a more or less level tableland at the base of the rock, and it was here, doubtless, that Henry and his suite were lodged on the nights of 25th, 26th, and 27th January 1077, for this space was occupied by the dwelling-places of serfs, husbandmen, artisans, and soldiers, and resolved itself into a miniature town. At any rate, so late as the year 1449, it was known as 'i borghi di Canossa' (see Campanini, p. 62) and was entered by one or two gates. The second wall appears to have started quite close to the base, and ascending gradually to the summit, defended an unprotected part which might otherwise have been scaled by besiegers. The third appears to have encircled the summit, protecting the citadel, the church, and Matilda's apartments.

when they discovered that his defiance of Gregory's anathema had broken down before the fear of losing his German kingdom. Guibert of Ravenna even ventured on remonstrances and taunts, but the King was not to be turned aside from his purpose. He had left Germany with the fixed determination of obtaining pardon from the Pope, and fear for once made him stand firm.

Hearing that Gregory was at Canossa, he resolved to journey there without delay. First, however, he deemed it wise to ascertain whether the Pope were likely to receive him; as a preliminary measure, therefore, he sent messengers ahead to Matilda, begging her to grant him an interview. Matilda acceded with alacrity to Henry's proposals, and a meeting-place was agreed upon. Henry, leaving his wife and child behind, and accompanied by his mother-in-law Adelaide, her son Amadeus, and the Marquis Azzo of Este, rode forth from Reggio, while Matilda and the abbot of Cluny descended from Canossa to the rendezvous. It seems probable that this intimate conference of Henry's friends was held at Bianello, Matilda's sentinel fortress, which, together with three other castles, mounts guard over the most direct approach to Canossa; possibly the great hall, where traces of a fresco-portrait of Matilda yet remain, was the actual scene of the debate. Here Henry represented his case to these friends, and implored them to tell the Pope that he came as a humble penitent; all he begged for the moment was to be absolved from the anathema. It was agreed that Matilda should return to Canossa, taking with her the King's relations, together with Hugo and Azzo of Este, in order that they too should use their influence and induce the supreme head of the Church to receive the penitent King. Gregory, however, was not

inclined to leniency, and after listening to what they had to say, he replied that it was an unheard-of thing to discuss a case without the presence of both accusers and accused, and he would wait till the council of Augsburg before making his decision; there Henry could plead his innocence in the presence of the princes, his accusers, and there justice should be rendered. In answer to the Pope's objections, the mediators urged that the King was only praying to be absolved from excommunication, that he would reply later to his accusers, and defer to the Pope's judgment entirely as to whether he should keep his kingdom or not.[1] Many messages were carried to and fro between Bianello and Canossa, many conferences were held during these anxious days. Matilda and the others pleaded that Henry should be received, not in his kingly character, but only as a sinful man, and represented strongly the danger he incurred of losing his kingdom for ever, if the appointed day passed and the ban were not raised. For a long while the Pope refused to yield in any way, for he doubted Henry's sincerity. At last he said, as if to test the King: 'If he is truly penitent, let him send me his crown and insignia of royalty in token that he deems himself unworthy to wear them.' For some reason these conditions struck the mediators as too severe, and they hesitated what to do. We are ignorant whether Matilda returned to Henry and told him precisely what the Pope had said, but in the meantime the King was anxiously waiting to learn the result of all the negotiations, and as already the third day had arrived, and no satisfactory answer had been given to his prayers, he was preparing to depart unabsolved. In a miserable frame of mind

[1] Lambert of Hersfeld, *Chron. rer. Germ.*, p. 220 *a*, *b*.

BIANELLO AND QUATTRO CASTELLÀ

MATILDA, HENRY IV AND HUGO OF CLUNY

FROM MS. OF DOMNIZO

he had retired to a chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas,[1] and begged that Matilda and Hugo of Cluny would come and confer with him. He then asked the abbot if it would not be possible for the latter to act as his surety with the Pope and swear that he would be true to his word. Hugo explained that such a proceeding was forbidden by his monastic vows. Matilda, however, added her prayers to Henry's, but the abbot answered her: 'I believe that you are the only one of us who can influence the Pope.' Then falling on his knees before her, Henry cried: 'Plead for me, cousin, plead for my forgiveness with the Holy Father. If you do not help me now, at once, I will never again break shield and buckler in battle, since the Pope has condemned me thus. Go therefore to him, oh! most valiant cousin, and make him bless me again. Go! I beseech you.'[2]

Matilda's heart was greatly touched by Henry's abject misery. That the defiant, haughty monarch could be brought so low, that nothing but the apostolic blessing could ease his soul, seemed a sign of true repentance, an earnest of real reform in the King's heart. Full of tender pity and eagerness to help, Matilda therefore once again retraced her footsteps and as swiftly as possible returned to her mountain home, where she sought an audience with the Pope. What arguments she used we do not know; there is some evidence[3] that Gregory was displeased at the persistency of her appeal. At any rate her mission was at length successful, and the following morning word was brought to Henry that eventually

[1] Recent Italian research, both topographical and historical, would seem to indicate that this was a chapel of some note attached to the neighbouring castle of Montezani, and often referred to in documents as Cappella Sancti Nicholai de Canuxia or de Canossa in Castro Montis Zani (see Appendix C).

[2] Dom., lib. II. cap. i.

[3] Lambert, p. 220 *b*.

Gregory would see him, but he must be prepared for a severe penance in order to expiate his sins. Accordingly that very morning, Henry, attended by a very small retinue, mounted his horse and rode up to Canossa. Arrived at the outer gate, he bade farewell to his companions and was admitted within the second enclosure, up the winding pathway which led to the gate of the citadel itself. Here, divested of his royal robes and kingly ornaments, clad only in a woollen shirt, and with bare feet, he knocked, and humbly craved admittance. No answer was given to this appeal, and throughout that dreary winter's day the King stood and knocked in vain. The gates remained fast closed; the Pope was not disposed to mildness now. The outcast ruler of unnumbered vassal-princes, the unworthy son of a mighty emperor, was indeed to drink the cup of humiliation to its very dregs. The cold was extreme, the snow lay deep on all sides, yet for three long days the penance lasted—on each successive day the scene repeated itself. From morn till eve the King fasted, and clad only in his penitential garb, knocked at the gates at intervals, begging to be admitted to the Pope's presence, always with the same result. Within Matilda's citadel we can imagine what horror and consternation prevailed, how long and earnestly the King's most valiant cousin pleaded for him, how his kinsfolk added their entreaties to hers, how Hugo and the various prelates ventured upon expostulations, how the horror of each hour that the King remained without dragged itself on through the length of those three dreadful days—from the tardy dawn of the wintry morn's uprising till the merciful dusk of evening closed in upon the mountains and shrouded Canossa in gloom, a gloom which meant some hours' respite to the wretched,

shivering penitent outside. The horror of it must certainly have been uppermost. To the men of the Middle Ages, a King was second only to the Pope himself. Whatever his crimes might be, there still remained the underlying conviction that a King was a divinely appointed ruler even as the Pope—a lesser light, it is true, burning dim at times, but still a light. Was the Pope not exceeding his authority in thus abasing the Lord's anointed? Was he not rather breaking the bruised reed, and quenching the smoking flax? Was a King to be treated with even more rigour than ordinary mortals, to be laid lower than they, in the process of purifying himself? Some such thoughts as these must have passed through the minds alike of mediators, onlookers, and those so lately absolved themselves, until at length the sentiment was voiced by one amongst them bolder than the rest, and Gregory himself was struck with what was said: 'This was not apostolic severity, but rather the cruelty of a tyrant!'

On the fourth day, therefore, the Pope relented, and the penance was brought to an end. It was made known to the King that Gregory would see him; the gates were thrown open and he was bidden to enter. Barefoot, almost naked, and half frozen with the cold, he was brought before the Pope, and throwing himself on the ground with his arms stretched out in the form of a cross, cried again and again: 'Pardon! Holy Father, pardon! Only deign to pardon me! I ask it from the depths of my heart.' And the Pope, moved at length by the sight of his sufferings, spoke to him commiseratingly and told him that the penance was at an end.[1]

Gregory appeared satisfied that the King was sincere

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. i.

in his expressions of contrition, solemnly removed the ban of excommunication, absolved the King, and received him again into the Church of the faithful, taking care, however, that sureties for his future good conduct should swear on *their* honour that the King would henceforth walk in the right way, and keep all the promises that he was then making. Hugo of Cluny, he who had baptized the King, forbidden by his monastic vows to swear as a layman, gave his word as a guarantee; and Azzo Adalberto, Matilda's kinsman and faithful friend, Liemar of Bremen, Gregory, Bishop of Vercelli, Benno of Osnabrück, Matilda and Adelaide, 'together with other German and Italian princes,'[1] undertook to act as Henry's sponsors. 'They swore on the relics of the saints that the Prince would accomplish what he had promised, and that no event, no necessity would make him change his resolution.'[2] The King was made to understand, however, that it was as a *man*, not as a king he was pardoned now. Gregory referred the matter of his quarrel with his subjects to a later tribunal, since he could not settle that matter without first hearing his accusers. All those present were greatly impressed with the apparent sincerity of the King's repentance.

One contemporary chronicler of these events tells of a further ordeal imposed upon the King.[3] This, however, it is said, he could not face. At a solemn mass celebrated immediately after in the church, when Henry was allowed to communicate, Gregory, after the consecration of the Host, raised it in his hands, and solemnly repeating all the sins that had been laid to his, the Pope's, charge,

[1] *Reg.*, iv. 12 *a*.

[2] Villemain, vol. ii. p. 127.

[3] Lambert of Hersfeld, pp. 220-221. This incident, however, has been much questioned by later writers.

said: 'Behold the Body of the Lord, which I to-day take in proof of my innocence, so that to-day the omnipotent God in His justice may absolve me from the suspicion of the crimes imputed to me if I am innocent, or may cause me to die suddenly if I am guilty.' And Lambert says further: 'Having pronounced these and other terrible words, with which he invoked God as the most just judge of his cause and asserter of his innocence, he took a part of the Body of the Lord and consumed it.' Turning to Henry, he said: 'My son, do thou as I have done. If God avouch thy innocence, thou wilt stop for ever the mouths of thy accusers.' Henry hesitated—stammered out that he must consult his friends; as this was a private ceremony, he would reserve the ordeal for a more public occasion, for his enemies would not accept such a method of justifying himself, and so forth. Was he in his heart already regretting the step he had taken, and was his penitence even now insincere? It is difficult to gauge the exact measure of his iniquities, and whether or not his sorrow and his desire for pardon were genuine for the moment, or whether he was deliberately acting a part; but whichever way we look upon this picture, with regard to previous or subsequent events, if we look back upon what had happened before Canossa —Henry's repeated promises of amendment to Gregory, his promise to his subjects, his failure to keep them, his reiterated defiance of Gregory's ecclesiastical authority; if we look forward to what happened afterwards, and see how little this solemn act of contrition influenced the King, how lightly he broke his word—on whichever side we look we cannot find that Gregory was over-severe, we can only feel that he had every right to make the most of the King's submission and cause the penance to be

a rigorous one—both as a punishment and as a warning. These were days when object-lessons were the most effective, when men paid more heed to absolute might than theoretic right. It was not Gregory who had been defied, it was the Church of God and, through the Church, the Almighty Himself. Through the power that the Almighty had placed in his hands, Henry had violated His laws, instead of upholding them. The King had failed in his obligations as a king and as a man ; therefore his kingship must be taken from him for a time, and his manhood must do penance to the utmost, since his sins had been more than those of an ordinary man. How little the warning served, how very superficial was Henry's repentance and sorrow, is shown by his subsequent conduct. Gregory's own account of the Canossa incident is interesting in the extreme. He addressed a letter to the bishops and princes of Germany thus :—[1]

' Gregory, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to all the Archbishops, Dukes, Counts, and rulers in the Teutonic Kingdom who defend the Christian faith, salutation and apostolic benediction !

' As in this struggle of the Church militant you have made common cause with us and shared our perils, we take pains with sincere charity to make known to your affection in what manner the King, having humbled himself by penitence, has obtained the grace of absolution, and how the whole affair has been conducted since his entrance into Italy up to now.

' According to that which had been agreed upon with your envoys, we arrived in Lombardy about twenty days before the day fixed in which certain chiefs were to conduct us over the passes, awaiting their arrival.

[1] Appendix D.

But the date passed, and it was told us, that owing to many difficulties, it had been impossible for them to come and meet us, which we readily believed; and as we had not with us the means to reach you, we remained in doubt as to what course we should take. In the meantime we learnt for certain that the King had arrived in Italy, and he, before entering the kingdom, had sent ambassadors to us, supplicating us, and promising us that he would give satisfaction in all things to God, to St. Peter, and to ourselves, and that he would entirely obey us in amending his ways, provided only he could obtain from us the grace of absolution, and the apostolic benediction. And whilst we deferred answering him, and were deliberating maturely, we did not cease to reprove him for his excesses by means of his ambassadors. Finally he laid aside all appearance of hostility and of anger, and came with a small suite to Canossa, where we were abiding. There for three days, before the gates, having put off every royal ornament, and with a demeanour that called forth pity, since he was barefoot, and clothed only in a woollen shirt, he did not cease to implore with many tears the apostolic clemency, so that all those who were present, moved to compassion by so sad a spectacle, began with prayers and with tears to intercede for him, marvelling at our unusual hardness of heart, and a few saying amongst themselves that this was not the sternness of apostolic severity, but rather the cruelty of a ferocious tyrant. At last, moved to pity by his compunction and by the warm prayers of those around us, we absolved him from the ban of excommunication, and received from him the promises which you will see below, the which were further confirmed by the abbot of Cluny, by our beloved daughters Matilda

and the Countess Adelaide, and by the princes, bishops and laymen, who seemed to us becoming in this respect.'

Gregory continues by saying that in a short time he will come to Germany in order to consult with them in a better manner on all things appertaining to the Church, and to decide with them if Henry is to be replaced on the throne. With this letter he sends the formula that Henry's friends had sworn to and signed, in which the King promises to submit himself hereafter to the judgment of the Pope as regards his kingdom, and to aid the Pope in every way in his journey to the meeting of the princes at Augsburg, or wherever else shall be determined. This document is dated 28th of January at Canossa.[1]

But to return to Henry. When the ceremony in the church was concluded, a banquet was prepared, and the Pope, the King, princes and bishops then present at Canossa, partook of Matilda's hospitality. After this Gregory gave the King a few parting words of advice, especially warning him against intercourse with certain of his former evil counsellors. The King promised obedience, and was forthwith bidden to depart in peace. No news of what was taking place at Canossa seems to have reached Reggio, where a number of the King's adherents, many of the excommunicated bishops of Lombardy among them, had gathered to await his return. They imagined the King was conferring with the Pope, and had not realised the intensity of his penitence. Before Henry had left Canossa, Gregory had despatched Ebbo of Naumburg to tell them of the King's readmission into the Church and to bid them come to the

[1] Appendix E.

Pope likewise and receive absolution, since through holding intercourse with an outlawed man, they too had come under the ban of excommunication. They replied with the greatest indignation. Submit to a Pope who had already been declared excommunicate himself! Never! If what the bishop told them was true, then the King must have taken leave of his senses! He was staining his name and honour, and lowering the glory of the Empire, by prostrating himself before such a priest! So great was the fury this news excited, that when Henry arrived at Reggio he found its gates closed against him, and on all sides he was constrained to hear inimical cries and threats. He found it difficult even to obtain provisions, and was obliged to encamp outside the city. As far as Italy was concerned, it was evident that his visit to Canossa had not served to increase his popularity. So high did the wave of feeling rise against him that there was some talk of electing his infant son in his place, and at once setting up Guibert of Ravenna as antipope.

It was only by a counter-plot that Henry managed to turn the tide. A few days later he sent to ask the Pope to accord him another interview. Gregory agreed to this, and accordingly at Bianello the meeting took place. In reality Henry was planning the Pope's ruin, though outwardly all submission. He listened with deference to the Pope's warnings and admonitions, and finally invited Gregory to confer with him shortly afterwards on the other side of the Po, that they might discuss more fully all the important matters on hand, and when many German princes would be present. Gregory and Matilda, entirely unsuspecting, started to this rendezvous, accompanied by a powerful escort.[1] Midway however, one of

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. i.

Matilda's men-at-arms, who had been despatched ahead, came riding back post-haste, and implored them to proceed no further. He had somehow managed to overhear that an ambush was being prepared for them, and Henry intended to seize Gregory and to carry him off, or else to kill him outright. At once the whole party wheeled round and returned safely to Canossa. Matilda, fearing further treachery on Henry's part, and knowing in what a rebellious condition many of the towns were, thanks to Guibert of Ravenna's machinations, persuaded Gregory to pass the spring and part of the summer in her domains. So from one strong castle to another among the Reggian hills Gregory went, loyally upheld and protected by Matilda's warriors and vassals. From letters of his still extant we know that he was at Bianello, Carpi,[1] and Carpineta; that he celebrated Easter at Nonantula; that on the 12th of May he had ventured as far as Figarolo in the Ferrarese, then back to Carpineta. Finally in August he descended from the mountains into Florence,[2] and on September 1st he was in Siena.

Matilda was forced to leave the Pope from time to time on matters connected with the government of her states. She was in Florence in June of this year and

[1] This castle of Carpi, round which there gathered a small town, was situated some fifteen miles north of Modena. Matilda defended it against the Imperialists in 1083, and entertained Pope Pasqual there in 1106, possibly on his way to the Council of Guastalla. She made liberal concessions to the inhabitants of the town. The several franchises they obtained from her may be considered as forming the elements of the municipal laws of those people, reduced later to a formal code.

(This note was compiled from the registers kept by the 'Commissione Municipale di Storia e Belle Arti' at Carpi.)

[2] Tiraboschi, p. 122; Overman, pp. 141-142. The Pope's itinerary can he traced with more or less exactitude from the *Registrum* (see Jaffé). There is mention made of a letter to 'William, King of the English,' dated March 21st, from Bibianello.

also in the neighbourhood of Pisa. Domnizo tells us that she accompanied the Pope for many months, and we may conclude that she joined him wherever possible, and escorted him to Florence later.

All idea of Gregory's visit to Germany had finally to be abandoned, since Henry would not, and Rudolf of Suabia could not, provide him with a safe-conduct; in the middle of September, therefore, the Pope returned to Rome. Here Domnizo has lost sight of the seasons, perhaps with a view to express himself poetically, for he says: 'And when the may was flowering in the fields, the Pope returned to Rome, and the people hearing from him what great things Matilda had done, cried out, "May she live for ever!"'[1]

[1] Lib. II. cap. i.

CHAPTER XII

Civil war in Germany and the campaign against Rudolf of Suabia—Gregory still hesitates to excommunicate Henry again—Rebellion of the Lucchese against Matilda—Gregory pronounces anathema on Henry once more and sends Rudolf the imperial crown; Henry has Guibert elected Pope at Brixen—Rout of Matilda's troops at Volta and death of Rudolf—Henry and Guibert encamp on the meadows of Nero outside Rome, and for three years Rome is invested during the winter—Anselm's letter to Guibert in defence of Matilda—Matilda forced to send Canossa's treasure to the help of Rome—Triumph of the schismatics—Henry's coronation in Rome—The Normans in Rome—Flight of Henry—Sack of the city.

CONFUSION now reigned in the land, and civil war raged in Henry's own dominions. The King seems to have been possessed by a cruel, relentless spirit, without mercy, without justice, without faith; for it was not only to the Pope that he failed to keep his word; again and again he broke it to his own subjects, and to those on whom he had made war. In the campaign undertaken against Rudolf of Suabia, he shamefully set at naught a truce agreed upon by both the contending parties, carrying war, fire, and sword into Rudolf's own dominions. The miserable peasants fled to the churches for shelter, but these were ruthlessly fired by Henry's troops. Upon one such occasion over a hundred people were burnt alive. The King made no effort to stay these wanton deeds of cruelty.[1]

[1] Villemain, vol. ii. p. 193; Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 448.

In spite, however, of the fact that the majority of the German princes had elected Rudolf king, in spite of Henry's repeated treacheries, Gregory remained neutral for some considerable time—whether from motives of policy or clemency it is difficult to judge. Continual envoys were sent to Rome by the rival monarchs, and council after council was held, at which many excommunications were pronounced.

Matilda seems to have been anxious that Henry should once more be given a favourable hearing, judging from a letter Gregory addressed to her early in 1079. She appears to have suggested that her cousin Theodoric, Duke of Upper Lorraine, would act as mediator between Henry and the Pope, if Gregory would interest himself in the matter of the duke's marriage with the widow of the Marquis Petronio. Gregory, however, refused to have anything to do with Theodoric, since he had been excommunicated more than once by the Bishop of Metz.[1]

During this time Matilda was obliged to pay repeated visits to Lucca and to try with Anselm's help to quell incipient rebellions amongst the citizens, who were aided and abetted by the canons. Of all her cities Lucca appears to have given her the most trouble. The clergy were particularly licentious, and longed to be free of Gregory's stern rule ; they were continually urging the citizens to revolt and to throw in their lot with Henry, and they even plotted to assassinate Anselm. The irregular lives of these ecclesiastics became such a scandal that Gregory decided they should be deprived of their ecclesiastical benefices, and that they should be judged by a court of laymen.[2]

[1] Fiorentini, lib. II. pp. 109-110; Villemain, vol. ii. p. 224. See Gregory's letter, *Reg.*, vi. 22 (3rd March 1079). [2] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 195.

Subsequently he wrote to say they were to be expelled from the province of Lucca. To Matilda the plot against Anselm was so horrible, that she wished to have the conspirators punished with extreme rigour, degraded to the rank of serfs at her court. This they never forgave her, and henceforth lost no opportunity of welcoming Henry to their city; for many years after, Lucca was to Matilda a veritable thorn in the flesh.

In the year 1080 Rudolf was able to report a series of victories gained by his troops. News came to Rome about the same time how shamefully Henry had treated the Papal legates, and how in every way he continued to defy ecclesiastical authority. Gregory hesitated no longer. Anathema was once more pronounced on Henry, and to Rudolf the Pope sent an imperial crown bearing the inscription, 'Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolpho.' Henry retaliated by holding a council of his adherents at Brixen, at which thirty Italian bishops were present, and there Guibert of Ravenna was declared Pope.

Guibert, Archbishop of Ravenna, a native of Parma, a great friend of Cadalous, was a very different type of man from his predecessor, the former antipope. Of good birth, distinguished bearing, and blameless life, his talents and education certainly fitted him to occupy an exalted position in the Church. Had the See of Peter not been already in the possession of one worthier than he, it is possible that Guibert would have made a distinguished successor to the apostle. As it was, his career was a singularly blemished one, owing mainly to the ambition which obsessed him, to the extinction of all better qualities. As a young ecclesiastic, Guibert had ingratiated himself with the rulers of the German court, and during the regency

of the Empress Agnes he was made imperial chancellor in Italy. When Hanno came into power he was removed from this post, but later he was raised to the Archbishopric of Ravenna through the influence of the Empress, and came to Rome for his consecration a few weeks before the death of Pope Alexander. For some time Guibert remained on good terms with Hildebrand, but a disagreement about the lordship of Imola, to which he had advanced claims, was the primary cause of an estrangement between the new Pope and the ambitious archbishop, that led at length to open enmity on Guibert's part. If not actually implicated in the conspiracy of Cencius, Guibert showed the latter every favour after the failure of his attempt upon the Pope, and from that time onward Ravenna became the headquarters of the schismatics, and its archbishop their acknowledged leader. Since he could hope for no preferment from Gregory, he was at pains to keep on good terms with Henry, possibly as a means of compassing the downfall of his hated rival. And now it would seem as if he had attained the object of his ambition. 'Yet,' as the historian Giesebrecht remarks so truly, 'Hildebrand in his abasement was greater than his adversary in prosperity, for the former was dominated by an ideal which gave weight to all his actions, while Guibert in his empty honours was, and remained always, the tool of others.'

When the decision of the Brixen Council became known, the disaffected parts of Lombardy, and such towns elsewhere whose clergy refused to conform to the canons of the Church, at once rose in arms. Troublous times followed, most distressful both to Matilda and Gregory. In the south of Italy, Robert Guiscard, having been successfully treated with by the Pope, threw in his lot with

the Papal power, but his help was extremely unreliable, since at that time he was engaged in warring against the Greeks. With this exception, there was no great lord upon whom Gregory could count. Lombardy was for long the centre of the conflict—and for a while the schismatics triumphed. On the 15th of October, at Volta, in the Mantuan territory, Matilda's troops met Henry's, and after some severe fighting the Countess's army was routed. The same day in Germany, on the banks of the Elster, Rudolf of Suabia received his death-wound on another battlefield by the hand of Godfrey of Bouillon, Matilda's nephew, and expired a few days later. These two occurrences helped to swell the ranks of Henry's adherents.

For Matilda the years that followed must have been the bitterest, the most troublous of her long, strenuous life. Town after town fell away from her, vassal after vassal deserted her, the schismatic bishops grew in number,[1] and the antipope waxed ever stronger. She retired into her Lombard fastnesses, well aware that now the defensive part was the wisest. In her last extremity there would always be her beloved Canossa, in which she could defy her enemies successfully—for Canossa had never yet yielded to the foe—and amongst the mountains there still remained many a castle fortress, whose lords were true to her, and willing to fight for her to their very last breath. Gregory, however, was alive to the fact that Matilda's resources were being sorely strained. We have on record a letter of his of this period, written

[1] It must always be borne in mind that the bishops of this period were practically great feudal lords, so that it was not only their ghostly moral influence that counted in any battle or campaign, it was the solid consideration of their presence on a battlefield with a corresponding number of retainers to fight for the party they favoured.

possibly in 1081, and addressed to the Bishop of Passau—his vicar in Germany—and the abbot of Hirsau, begging them most urgently to let 'our daughter Matilda know if she can depend upon them for sending her sufficient help in the way of men-at-arms to maintain her difficult position; otherwise she will be forced to make peace with Henry, or lose all her possessions.'[1] The help was never sent, however, and still Matilda managed to hold on without yielding. Curiously enough, when Henry entered Italy in 1081 and marched through Tuscany to Vallombrosa and on to Ravenna, he does not appear to have molested her territories to any great extent.[2] He was probably in haste to reach Guibert and confer with him on the projected campaign against Rome. Henry had been plotting to draw away Robert Guiscard's allegiance from the Pope, and in May of this same year Matilda sent to let Gregory know that a match was being projected between Conrad, Henry's son, and Robert Guiscard's daughter. This was evidently only a report brought to Matilda by some messenger from Henry's court, for we hear no more of the match afterwards.

Henry and Guibert agreed to march upon Rome immediately, and they reached the customary camping-ground for invading armies, the meadows of Nero, some time in the month of May 1081.

[1] See Overman, p. 148; *Reg.*, viii. 26.

[2] It was in this year, however, that he besieged Florence without succeeding in reducing the city. The Florentines had fortified themselves against the Emperor by building a new wall around the city, and Henry abandoned the siege after a few months. Muratori says (*Annali*, vol. vi. p. 269): 'If the Florentine historians are to be believed, Henry besieged Florence ineffectually from April until the 21st of July. Villani writes, however, that the siege terminated on the 12th of April. However this may be, it is certain that, about the feast of Pentecost, King Henry appeared before Rome with an army and with the antipope Guibert.'

Some fighting took place, but nothing of any note was effected, and the hot weather soon began to tell upon Henry's troops, and made a movement to the north desirable. So the Emperor returned into Tuscany, and marching to Lucca, was received with open arms by its citizens. He granted them privileges, and relieved them from some burdensome taxations as awards for their welcome. And it must have been at this time in Lucca that a solemn court of law was held in Henry's presence, and Matilda pronounced guilty of high treason. She was placed under the ban of the Empire, and her goods and her lands declared confiscate. It is manifest that Henry was never in a position to enforce the decisions of this court as far as Italy was concerned, but several documents testify that he freely made donations of her property in Lorraine to others of his subjects.[1]

A creature of Henry's was now appointed Bishop of Lucca, and Anselm was forced to flee. He took refuge with Matilda, and never again returned to Lucca. Shortly afterwards he was appointed the Pope's vicar in Lombardy, and bishop of those cities whose erstwhile bishops had gone over to the enemy. Gregory, in token of his esteem, sent him his pontifical mitre. Anselm's office was no sinecure, for many cities were very indisposed to receive him in his official capacity. His counsels to Matilda, both spiritual and practical, were invaluable. So important was his position considered as Matilda's adviser, that Guibert did his best to entice him away from her side. Anselm replied by a spirited letter upholding his own party and Matilda in particular:[2] 'As for the prayer you make me,' he says, 'no longer to prevaricate or deceive a very noble lady, I call God to witness, that

[1] See here Overman, pp. 149, 232 *et seq.* [2] Tosti, lib. IV. p. 256.

I have, in remaining with her, no thought of any temporal or terrestrial advancement. I ask God to remove me from this perverse country, where I tremble in remaining so long in servitude, occupied day and night in keeping this lady close to God and the Holy Church, whose orders confided her to me, and I hope by this means to prepare for myself a worthy reward before God for having preserved her thus, she who does not dissipate her riches, but has amassed eternal treasure in heaven, being ready not only to give all her worldly goods for the defence of justice, but fight with her blood for your confusion and the glory of the Church, until God delivers over his enemy into the hands of a woman.'

All the summer Henry was occupied in harassing Matilda, driving her faithful vassals from their castles, laying waste her lands, and gaining more ascendency over her towns. The heaviest, bitterest time of all must have been the spring of 1082, when so beset was she by her enemies, that she could spare no vassals to fight for the Pope, and was forced to draw on the so-called 'treasure' of Canossa, to send at least, in the shape of gold and silver, some help to poor, beleaguered Rome. For during all these troubled years no one ever appealed in vain to this gracious lady. It was not only the poor of Italy she succoured, but foreign bishops, priests, and monks—all were sure of a welcome at Canossa, sure of practical and ready help. 'To the charity of giving she added such courtesy, in deed and word, that the benefited went away consoled and strengthened, and more able to endure their terrible persecutions.' An ideal Châtelaine was Matilda, therefore, in the midst of wars and all the strenuousness of this long drawn-out campaign.

Now, however, with resources so severely taxed, she

had to borrow from the Church. By Anselm's advice an order was given to the Abbot Gerard of Canossa to have the greater part of the treasury melted down. Domnizo tells us exactly what the treasury contained.[1] We can hardly imagine the extent of the sacrifice to Matilda. To draw on the Church's treasures to help the Holy See in its direst need she deemed only right and fitting; but to make away with all the beautiful works of art collected by her ancestors for so many generations must have caused her many a heartache. Nonantula's monastery[2] was also called upon to yield its treasures, but their worth was restored in 1103.

For the time being, Tuscany was almost entirely lost to Matilda. Her lords were in Henry's army fighting against the Pope at Rome. Yet not once did her brave spirit falter, not once did she think of making terms with the enemy. 'God, who reserved this most intrepid woman for the purpose of confounding Henry,' says Vedriani,[3] 'gave her such a generous and lofty mind that she was dismayed at no danger or difficulty.' The difficulties, however, of this period are glossed over by this very partial historian, for he says further: 'Aided by the strength of her many impregnable fastnesses and by the invincible love of her people, she lost none of these battles, and she weakened Henry's power and that of the antipope.'

At Rome the schismatics did not make much headway. In time they gained the Leonine city and forced Gregory to retire to the castle of St. Angelo, but within Rome proper he had many steadfast adherents who carried on

[1] See Chapter I.

[2] Nonantula is situated some miles to the north-east of Modena.

[3] Vol. ii. pp. 49-50.

a stubborn resistance. So the campaign dragged on. Each summer the intense heat drove the Germans from the region of Rome once more northwards into Lombardy to attack Matilda. At last, in 1084, Henry won over the greater part of the city and was able to take up his residence in the Lateran palace. In St. Angelo, in the meanwhile, Gregory was stoutly defended. Many Roman nobles had joined him, and continued to fight for his cause, and several strong towers and fortified places on the Tiber itself refused to yield to the Imperialists. Rusticus, a nephew of Gregory, held the Celian and Palatine Hills for him,[1] while the Pierleoni occupied the island of the Tiber. Skirmishes and assaults continued, and Rome had not therefore entirely yielded, although day by day the Papal party lost ground.

On Easter Day the antipope Guibert crowned Henry and Bertha, his wife, in St. Peter's. From the tower of St. Angelo Gregory may have watched the imperial procession cross the bridge and wind along the banks towards St. Peter's, and may have felt for a time that evil was certainly triumphing. Yet no thought of yielding to the oppressor crossed his mind, even later, when a letter was brought him from his friend Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino, telling how Henry threatened to despoil the abbey, unless the abbot consented to receive the investiture of it from him, and obey whatever orders the Emperor should choose to give him.

The Pope's situation grew more and more desperate. He had sent many a messenger to Robert Guiscard begging him to come to the help of Rome as he had promised. At length Guiscard obeyed the summons, and marching from Salerno with a large force, he com-

[1] Gregorovius, vol. iv. p. 239.

pelled the imperial party to raise the siege, liberated Gregory, and installed him in the Lateran palace. Henry, on hearing the news of Guiscard's approach, had at once abandoned Rome, together with his antipope, declaring to the Romans that urgent matters of state called him back to Germany. Unfortunately the Romans rallied and determined on their own account to make a stand against Guiscard. The Normans had in their army detachments of Saracenic mercenaries, and these spared neither woman nor child; the most terrible outrages were committed, many ancient monuments perished, and the greater part of the city was soon in flames. Robert would not or could not curb his soldiery, and never had Rome sustained such misery, even at the hands of Totila or Attila.

At length some influential Romans, with ropes round their necks and naked swords in their hands, rushed into Guiscard's presence and implored him to put an end to the sack. He, moved by pity, yielded to their entreaties and succeeded in restoring order; thus the sack and pillage of Rome were brought to an end.

Although there are various traditions that it was Gregory who threw himself at the feet of the Norman duke, imploring him to have mercy on Rome, and saying, 'I came to build, not to destroy,' Gregorovius says that there is not one single contemporary historian who mentions the fact, or who speaks of any effort on Gregory's part to spare Rome. Was it because that proud spirit was at last beginning to break, and he felt it useless to remonstrate, or was he willing, as Gregorovius hints,[1] to acquiesce in the destruction of Rome for the sake of his ideals, 'even as he had sacrificed the peace of the world to them'?

[1] Gregorovius, vol. iv. p. 248.

CHAPTER XIII

Gregory's last Lateran Council—Matilda's letter to the faithful in Germany—Gregory's retreat to Salerno—Extract from his letter to the faithful abroad—Matilda's victory at Sorbara—Death of Gregory, 25th May 1085, at Salerno.

A MOMENT of peace now reigned over the city, and Gregory profited by this to call together a council at the Lateran, where he once more excommunicated the antipope and Henry, and all those who had given them allegiance—'the last act of courage and of vigour of his Pontificate.'[1] But there still remained a great number of Guibert's adherents, and Gregory's position was by no means assured, and although Henry had retired northwards for the time being, it was quite probable he would return ere long. Moreover, Robert Guiscard was anxious to leave the neighbourhood of Rome and embark upon a new campaign in the East. It hardly seemed safe for the Pope to remain undefended in Rome, and he resolved to accompany Guiscard as far as Salerno, with a very small retinue of his own. Many of the cardinals had gone over to the enemy, and the 'seal of the Fisherman' had fallen into Henry's hands. Very confused rumours spread over Italy as to Gregory's fate, some asserting that he was detained as a prisoner by Guiscard. To contradict these rumours and to stimulate the Papal party to fresh

[1] Vitelleschi, p. 353.

resistance was now Matilda's care. So soon as she could, she sent her envoys into Germany with the following letter, in the hope of dispelling the fears that the news of the Pope's retirement from Rome might cause :—[1]

'Matilda such as she is by the grace of God, if she is anything, to all the faithful in the kingdom of the Teutons greeting! We inform you that Henry the false king has obtained by theft the seal of our lord Pope Gregory. Therefore if anything is announced to you which is contrary to the words of our envoys, deem it false, and do not believe Henry's lies. Moreover, he has taken with him the Bishop of Porto, because that man was formerly of the household of our lord the Pope. If therefore by his aid he undertakes any enterprise either for or against you, do not hesitate to regard this bishop as a false witness: and place no faith in any who dare tell you otherwise than we have done. Know that the lord Pope has already reconquered Sutri and Nepi. Barrabas the robber, that is to say, Henry's Pope, has taken flight also. Farewell, and beware of Henry's ambuscades!'

[1] From Villemain, vol. II. lib. ix. p. 357.

We give here the text of the letter from the *Chronicon Hugonis Abbatis Flaviacensis* (ed. Migne).

'Mathildis Dei gratia si quid est, omnibus in Theuthonicorum regno commorantibus salutem.

'Notum vobis facimus, quod Henricus falsus rex furto subripuit sygillum domni papae Gregorii. Unde si quid audieritis quod discordet a nostra legatione falsum arbitramini neque mendaciis ejus adquiescatis. Preterea episcopum Portuensem secum ducit; quoniam olim fuit familiaris domni papae. Si igitur aliquid vobiscum vel contra vos per eum vult operari, eum falsum testem nolite dubitare. Nulli unquam credatis, qui aliter quam nos dicere audebit. Sciatis domnum papam jam recuperasse Sutrium atque Nepe. Barrabas latro, id est Heinrici papa, ipse quoque aufugit. Valete et de insidiis Heinricis cauti estote.'

Gregory had left Rome a week after its fearful sack had come to an end. The months of imprisonment in St. Angelo had greatly sapped his physical strength, and the apparent hopelessness of the struggle was beginning to tell on that once proud spirit. Robert appears to have treated him with all reverence and consideration, but not even this fact, together with the tender devotion of his own particular little band of faithful bishops and priests, could soften the hardness of his fate. Rome was his no longer, and even Guiscard's arms and Guiscard's prowess were not equal to the task of reinstating him firmly and permanently. That Matilda in far-off Lombardy could not come to his aid, as she had done so many times before, that his cardinals had deserted him, or were themselves prisoners, combined to render the situation hopeless. Yet, once fairly established in Salerno, some of his old vigour reasserted itself in the tone of the letters he addressed to the faithful abroad. For he makes no mention of the downfall of Rome and his own enforced retreat to Salerno, and the note of dominant sadness in these letters is rather the sadness that the Church should be brought so low. While his own misfortunes counted for little or nothing, he felt the weight of the triumph of the ungodly.

'The princes of the nations,' he says,[1] 'and the chief amongst the priests are united together at the head of a great multitude, against Christ the Son of God, and against his apostle St. Peter, in order to extinguish the Christian religion and propagate heresy. But, by the grace of God, they have not been able, by any promises of worldly glory, to win over to their impiety those who trust in the Lord. They have had, in fact, only one

[1] Villemain, vol. II. lib. x. p. 373; Ep. Collect., 46, p. 572 *et seq.*

motive in conspiring against us, and that is, that we would not be silent over the peril of Holy Church, nor yield to those who do not blush to place her in bondage. . . . What numberless ills have had their origin from this, perils of all sorts, and unheard-of crimes of a cruel war, you can learn clearly from our legates; and if you are really afflicted by the ruin and upheaval of the Christian faith, and if, touched by real sorrow, you can lend to Holy Church a helping hand, you can learn the means to do so from their mouth; for they are most faithful to the blessed Peter, and are accounted, each one according to their rank amongst the familiars of his household. No fear, no temporal promises could detach them from the faith, or separate them from the bosom of Holy Church. For the rest, as your fraternity knows what was said on the mountains to an unworthy servant, and these words of the prophet, " Shout aloud and tire not," I, by will or by force, leaving behind me all shame, all affection, all fear, I preach the Gospel, I cry again, I cry without ceasing, and I announce to you that the Christian religion, the true faith that was taught to our fathers by the Son of God descending from heaven, to day transformed into a secular practice, is almost reduced to nothing, and has become the derision not only of the devil, but of the Jews, Saracens, and heathen.' He continues, that since the time of the great Constantine the devil has never had such power against the Church, and that they are not to be astonished, as the ' Day of Antichrist was approaching.'

Matilda, meanwhile, was grimly defending her Lombard strongholds, and in a few months' time the news of her victory over the King's forces, in July 1084, at Sorbara, came to the Pope. A detachment of cavalry and infantry under the command of a certain Marquis Oberto, together

with the schismatic bishops of Reggio and Parma, had halted before this Modenese castle and proceeded to assault it fiercely. Word was brought to Matilda, however, that the besieging force was growing careless, and little vigilance was displayed by their sentries. Forthwith valiant Bishop Anselm counselled her to take immediate action, and Matilda, only too willing to follow his advice, at once prepared for an attack. Taking advantage of a very dark night, she, with a small company of her bravest men, stole close upon the assaulters and silently surrounded them. It was understood that a loud shout of St. Peter's name should be the signal for the onslaught. 'The soldiers of the enemy were buried in sleep, when suddenly they were struck in the ears by the formidable sound of the name of the Apostolic Vicar of Christ, and at the same moment in the vitals by the sword, and thus they passed from the lethargy of sleep to the velocity of death.'[1] The surprise, the shouts, the darkness all combined to bewilder the besiegers, and although their commander attempted to rally his men and make some sort of a stand, the confusion was too great, and he was killed on the spot. The Bishop of Parma, six noble captains, and a hundred knights were taken prisoners. Gandolf, Bishop of Reggio, fled naked, and remained hidden in the bushes for some days, when he was also captured. Five hundred horses, quantities of armour and baggage, fell into Matilda's hands. What rejoicings there must have been at Canossa when she returned there in triumph, with prisoners and spoils of war!

The story of Sorbara must have been the last good news that was brought to Gregory in his exile. His

[1] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 219.

health was failing more and more. Robert Guiscard had departed on his expedition to the East, and little remained to cheer the aged Pope. He died in the spring of the following year,[1] uttering with his last breath those memorable words, which in their haunting sadness, in the intensity of their feeling, seem an epitome of all bitterness, of all the unrighted wrong that man has ever suffered : ' I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; therefore I die in exile.' How many exiled outcast spirits have echoed these words in the ages that have passed since the dying Pontiff breathed forth the only lament that the world ever heard from his lips ! Yet Gregory's work was so great, so lasting, could he but have known it ; had the seer's vision been vouchsafed to him, the sorrow of death might have been softened. To the fierce mediæval world he had given a new ideal. He changed the attitude towards the Church, and raised her from degradation to a height she had never known before. And if, outwardly, he died unsuccessful in that which he had undertaken, at least he had made the Church a great power, a power to be reckoned with in Christendom, and those principles for which he had lived and fought and died, grew all important to her through the life he had lived, and the light he had kindled. Looking back on the turmoil of his long strenuous life, he summed it up in the words of the Psalmist of old : ' I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity.' In the life upon which he entered then, perhaps the end of David's verse became the truth, and the bitterness of Gregory's version passed away with all things mortal.

[1] 25th May 1085.

CHAPTER XIV

Pestilence and famine visit Italy in 1085—Death of Anselm of Lucca —Desiderius of Cassino elected Pope—Refuses the Papacy at first—At length gives his consent and is installed in Rome as Pope, 1087—Matilda entertains Robert of Normandy, but rejects his suit—Matilda learns bad news from Rome and hastens to take the field once more—Arrives in Rome and confers with Pope Victor, June 1087—They agree to attack the schismatics, but are discomfitted—Death of Pope Victor, Sept. 1087.

IMMEDIATELY after Gregory's death nearly all Matilda's historians turn aside from personal matters to relate the terrible calamities that befell the land.—'The scourge of God to punish the schismatics,' they say, and as if to verify this statement, they proved that Lombardy was the most heavily visited of all Italian provinces. First came a terrible famine—so terrible that the unhappy peasants in their misery were driven to feed upon 'every kind of filth.'[1] After the years of warfare that Italy had suffered, was it any wonder that there was scarcity of provisions? Then followed the pestilence which decimated the population, and afterwards the autumn rains swelled the rivers to such an extent that miles and miles of sullen water flooded the land, whole districts were devastated, and the few remaining cultivated spots were ruined for the time being. Death visited heavily the greatest in the land. Tedaldo, the schismatic Bishop of Milan, the two ex-Bishops of Reggio

[1] See Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 222, and others.

and Parma (who had been taken prisoners at Sorbara), and several of Matilda's great rebel vassals, 'went miserably out of this life.' [1] These men, great by reason of their birth and position, had not only passed over to the enemy, but had not scrupled to sully Matilda's fair name with evil stories, so say the chroniclers,[2] and they tell us only those parts of Italy were spared that had remained faithful to Matilda! So struck were the towns by this exhibition of divine vengeance, that many of them returned to their rightful allegiance, Lucca, Modena, Reggio, and Pistoia again accepting Matilda's rule. For the moment Lombardy was delivered from strife, and during this lull Matilda set to work very earnestly to restore law and order. Through Anselm's care and counsel, fresh bishops were appointed to the whilom rebel cities, and they were freed from certain kinds of taxes, which, owing to all the miseries of war, pestilence, and famine, they found particularly burdensome.

Early in the year 1086 a great sorrow befell Matilda, for her saintly counsellor was taken from her. Hearing Anselm was ill, she hurried to Mantua, and was able to comfort his last hours by her presence. He died on the 18th of March, and was buried in the cathedral with great pomp. For years he had been one of the Church's stoutest defenders, and had never spared himself in labouring for her. All over Lombardy he travelled backwards and forwards, writing, admonishing, preaching. Many of his writings are still extant;—vigorous letters addressed to Guibert and Henry, and two whole

[1] *Adalbert e Reginhero, Marchesi, il Conte Bossone ed altri innumerabili*, Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 223, who quotes here also Berthold of Constance (anno 1085).

[2] Tosti, lib. IV. p. 267.

volumes against Guibert's schism.[1] He also wrote an expository treatise on the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and at the time of his death was engaged upon a commentary on the Psalms for Matilda. He was considered most learned in holy writ, and well versed in the works of the fathers of the Church. His death was a cause of great lament to all who knew him, and from far and wide came cardinals, bishops, and soldiers to attend his funeral; in fact, the whole of Italy mourned him, and even his enemies could not forbear to praise him.[2] Fiorentini says of him: 'He fought together with Matilda, unwearied amongst hardships, immutable in danger, respected by the soldiers, and religious in the midst of arms. He was often with her in the tribunals, and known as independent in his opinions, disinterested in his judgments, and inflexible in his justice.'[3]

If Gregory the Seventh had not been the great man he was, posterity might have heard more of Anselm, whose fame has been overshadowed by his wonderful contemporary. Yet it is possible that Anselm in Gregory's position would not have carried the reform of the Church so far. Anselm, of noble birth, had perhaps more traditionary hesitations than Gregory, but he was a very typical example of that wonderful product of the Middle Ages, a man who combined the best qualities of ecclesiastic and soldier, capable of fighting both ghostly and material battles, and conquering in either.

In Rome at this time matters were still in a very unsettled condition. A short while before his death Gregory had been asked by the cardinals and bishops for advice in the choice of a successor. He had suggested

[1] These are published in the *Biblioth. Patrum*, tom. xviii. (see Don Tosti).
[2] Tosti, lib. IV. p. 272.
[3] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 227.

first and foremost Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino; if he would not accept such a heavy responsibility, they were to choose Otto, Bishop of Ostia, Hugo, Archbishop of Lyons, or Anselm of Lucca. Therefore a short while after Gregory had breathed his last, the cardinals went to Desiderius, and told him how by common consent he had been chosen to fill the Holy See, since he was deemed by all the most worthy of such high office. Desiderius, however, shrank from accepting the honour conferred upon him, and he seems in no ways to have fulfilled Gregory's expectations, for he felt himself unequal to the task of setting Rome in order, and withstanding the antipope. The more the cardinals tried to persuade him, the more reluctant he grew. He had letters sent to Matilda begging for her opinion on the subject, but the only reply elicited from her was that she fully approved of his election.

At length, after a year's interregnum, during which time Guibert reigned undisturbed in Rome, Desiderius yielded to the supplications of the faithful, and consented to enter the city as Pope. Robert Guiscard had perished in his Eastern campaign, but his son Roger, who remained faithful to the Papal party, together with the princes of Capua and Salerno, firmly upheld his cause. By their aid, Desiderius was installed in Rome in the spring of 1087, and after driving out Guibert from St. Peter's, it became possible for the pontifical coronation to take place within its walls in the usual manner. Desiderius was therefore consecrated Pope as Victor III. in the month of May of that same year.

Matilda had been so occupied with the care of Lombardy that it was impossible for her to take any active part in the enthronement of the new Pope. In the spring, when

she was holding her court in Lucca, there came to visit her an important guest, bringing a suite of foreign lords with him. This was none other than Robert of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror. He had rebelled against his father and had been driven out of Normandy, and was now engaged in visiting different courts of Europe,[1] in the hopes of gaining help wherewith to reinstate himself in his duchy. He had doubtless heard much of Matilda during his visits; he determined therefore to come and see her, and judge for himself if the tales of her wealth, courage, and ability were true. Then there came an idea that if he could persuade this powerful princess to become his wife, his own position would be at once reassured, and his Norman duchy restored to him. Perhaps even the story was told him of how successful another adventurous duke had been in wooing her mother for the second time, and gave him good augury for his own suit.

All accounts agree that Robert of Normandy was handsome, gallant, and brave, and in little Lucca he, with the Norman barons in his train, must have made a goodly show. No doubt there was much excitement at their arrival, at the festivals held in their honour, and many surmises as to whether 'la nostra Contessa' would in reality take this Norman prince as a second husband. But although Matilda received him courteously, and entertained him regally, she would not listen favourably to his suit. He was evidently unable to make sufficient impression on her heart for the match to have been one of personal inclination, and from a political point of view there was nothing to be gained by it. This little link with our own history is interesting to English people,

[1] 'Lorraine, Flanders, and Germany,' says Don Tosti, lib. v. p. 279.

as it is also interesting to think that, had the marriage taken place, our history might have been written differently. William the Conqueror might have softened towards his eldest son, and owing to his brilliant marriage, perhaps have left England to him and his heirs, and these islands might have suffered a second and yet harder foreign yoke after the Conqueror's days were done. Robert and Matilda evidently parted good friends, in spite of his unsuccessful suit, for he visited her again in Lucca some years later, on the occasion of his departure for the first Crusade.

Bad news from Rome now reached Matilda. The schismatics had gained ground once more, and the greater part of the city was in their possession. Pope Victor, too disheartened in spirit and too weak in health to make much of a stand, had retired to Monte Cassino, and left Guibert within the city entrenched in the Pantheon, one church after another being used by the rival Popes as fortresses. As soon as she could collect a sufficient force, Matilda decided to move on Rome, and make a great effort to drive out the antipope once for all. At the head of a splendid army, full of hopes that at last the dearest wish of all the faithful was about to be realised, she arrived at the city gates. At a crucial moment such as this, bitterly she must have sorrowed over Gregory's loss, for there was no one left in Rome to take the lead and help her now, with force of arms and weight of word. Her soldiers succeeded in dispersing Guibert's followers for a while, and she herself took up her abode on the little island of the Tiber, after despatching messengers to the Pope, imploring him to return to Rome to confer with her. Pope Victor, realising how important it might be for the weal of Christendom to see this

'faithful daughter of St. Peter,' managed to make the journey to Rome by sea and abode at the Vatican, often passing over to the island of St. Bartholomew to visit Matilda. The islet of the Tiber, given over in Pagan times to the worship of Æsculapius, had always been regarded as a refuge for the sick and suffering. In the year 1000 the Emperor Otto had built upon the ruins of the temple of Aesculapius a basilica dedicated to St. Bartholomew, and close by, some years later, the Pierleoni raised their fortress tower. It was here that Matilda stayed, protected no doubt by the Pierleoni. Whether the island still retained its reputation as a sanctuary we do not know, but it gave refuge later to Pope Urban II. in his days of poverty and distress.

Many must have been the discussions between Victor and Matilda over the affairs of the Church, and 'by their joint presence they greatly harassed the factionists of the antipope,' says Vedriani. A terrific attack was organised in June 'against these factionists,'[1] but it was not successful. None of the historians tell us how Matilda left Rome, or with what remnant of an army she reached her own territories. The Pope expired in the September of that year (1087), regretful to the last that he had ever been persuaded to leave his monastery. Perhaps the best summing up of his character is that of Gregorovius: 'The Abbot Desiderius was a great man and one of imperishable renown; Pope Victor III., an inglorious and shadowy figure.'[2]

[1] Vedriani, vol. ii. p. 58.

[2] Greg., Part I. vol. iv. p. 267.

CHAPTER XV

Election of Urban II.—Arranges for Matilda's second marriage—Matilda persuaded to consent to it for political reasons—Henry, furious at the marriage, besieges Mantua, which capitulates—Domnizo's lament over Mantua.

IT was some time before the cardinals could come to any agreement as to who should now occupy the Holy See, but Otto of Ostia was at length elected at a council assembled at Terracina, and on the 12th of March 1088 was consecrated as Urban II.

It will be remembered that Gregory, when dying, had suggested the Bishop of Ostia as a suitable candidate for the Papacy, and now that Victor III. was dead, no better man could be chosen, either from a religious or from a worldly point of view. Otto was a Frenchman by birth, and at one time had been prior of Cluny. He was well trained in diplomacy, and a man of the world as well as an ardent ecclesiastic, and devoted as he had been to Gregory, there was no doubt that he would do his utmost to continue the work of reform in the Church. His position at first was a precarious one, and for some time he was obliged to remain in the south of Italy under the protection of the Normans, since Guibert and his following were still all too strong in Rome; the latter, it is said, had obtained help from Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, half-brother of William the Conqueror. In the autumn, however, by the aid of his Norman allies,[1] the Pope was

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. iii. See also Don Davoli's notes, pp. 367-68.

able to enter Rome and gain some sort of a foothold. Gregorovius tells us that he was forced at first to remain on the island of the Tiber, and so poor that he received alms from the matrons of Rome![1]

Little by little the situation improved, and the Pope was able at length to make some stand as supreme head of the Church, though the schismatics still held the greater part of the city, and in Tuscany Matilda began to have trouble again. Lucca rose up in rebellion, and the Lucchese burnt a neighbouring castle out of revenge for what they considered the oppression of the nobles, and rumours were afloat that Henry meditated another descent into Lombardy, and naturally enough from thence upon Rome. Urban realised that there were troubles ahead for Italy and for Matilda. How could the situation be improved?

'To the daughter of Peter, and faithful handmaid of Christ, he directed his holy epistles,' says Domnizo,[2] 'reminding her above all things of the rule given her by Gregory, and admonishing her to observe it, and never to depart from it, and by this she would receive remission of her sins. Therefore, if the messengers of Gregory went often to Matilda, those of Urban ran ever more often to the same.' No doubt Urban exhorted Matilda to continue in the right way, but we cannot help feeling that there was yet another reason for the many letters that passed between them at this time, and that the negotiations for Matilda's second marriage with Guelf of Bavaria kept the messengers busy indeed! We can but wonder how the idea first arose. Possibly the story of Robert of Normandy's unsuccessful wooing reached the Pope's ears, and it may have occurred

[1] Greg., vol. iv. pt. i. p. 27.

[2] Lib. II. cap. iii.

to him then that if a more fitting suitor were to present himself, Matilda might be persuaded to accept him.

Urban was astute enough to realise that if the Church were to make any stand politically against the coming danger, and if she were ever to gain the supremacy at which she was aiming, it would be of the greatest value to strengthen Matilda's position, and how better could this be accomplished than by an alliance with her kinsman of Bavaria, grandson of that Marquis Azzo Adalbert of Este, who had always been a warm supporter of the Church's cause, and who had taken an active part in the memorable incident of Canossa ?

Azzo Adalberto d'Este, a descendant of Siegfried of Lucca (of whom mention has been made in the opening chapters as being the progenitor of the house of Canossa), was growing very old, in fact he had already entered his hundredth year, but his mental vigour was quite out of keeping with his age, and he lost no opportunity of adding to the number of his possessions and the greatness of his house. Some think that it was he himself who suggested the marriage in question. Azzo's own wife had been Cunigonde, princess of Bavaria, who brought her husband many lands and great riches. Their son, called Guelf IV. of Bavaria, succeeded to his maternal grandfather's principality, the male line of that house becoming extinct at his death. He, Guelf, had been formerly a staunch ally of Henry IV., and had materially assisted him in his Saxon campaigns; but when Henry finally broke with the Pope, Guelf, together with the other princes of Saxony and Suabia, declared against him. He had remained true to the Papal party, and had supported it most generously. In fact, it was entirely

owing to his efforts that Gregory's adherents in Germany had been able to hold together. Urban II., as his two predecessors had done, reposed the greatest confidence in this Bavarian duke. Guelf also owned considerable territories in Italy. He was Duke of Carinthia and Marquis of the Marches of Verona, and many of his estates bordered on those of his father.

It will easily be understood that this Italian-German house, by entering into a matrimonial alliance with Matilda, would gain further power in the south, and to the Papacy would be secured a sort of confederation of allies possessing in common such enormous tracts of territories that they equalled many a kingdom in extent. A kingdom stretching from the northern confines of Bavaria to the centre of Italy was not to be despised, and it would be a great thing to be able to count all its rulers, with their vassals, as allies.

Azzo Adalbert was very anxious that this marriage should take place, thinking, no doubt, that at Matilda's death her vast possessions would then come over to his branch of the family, either ignoring, or really ignorant of, Matilda's donation to the Papacy. He was, no doubt, very devoted to his grandson, who had been almost entirely brought up at his court. It is very difficult to imagine what arguments Pope Urban could have used to bring Matilda to consent to the marriage, beyond the most weighty argument of all—that of obedience to the Church's head. All the historians agree in saying that this was her sole reason for yielding. We can so well understand that except for political reasons the alliance must have been utterly distasteful to her. Up to this moment she had evinced a dislike to the idea of a second husband, and had refused the hand of many a princely aspirant.

She was a woman too strong in herself, differing too much in her upbringing from the women of her age, to accept the common idea of the absolute need of a protector; and since the termination of Godfrey il Gobbo's most unhappy relations with herself, she had stood alone, and been content so to stand. She had had no one in all these years to share her arduous tasks of governing and of fighting, and she had grown to depend upon herself alone.

We seem able to read between the lines of the very meagre accounts that have come down to us of this marriage, and to realise what a sacrifice Matilda was called upon to make. The historians of her own day emphasise the fact that she married Guelf ' out of obedience to the Roman Pontiff ' ; she has been called a fanatic, or held up to ridicule for so doing by later writers. Yet there could be no reason for her acquiescence in Urban's wishes but the pressing need of her country, and the desire to surrender her own will and inclination in obedience to the Holy Father. That she, with her ideals, with her strength of character, loved and reverenced by her people, the friend of so many great men who expressed the highest admiration for her, could have had any other motive for uniting her life with that of a youth of eighteen, is on the face of it ridiculous. Reluctantly Matilda gave her consent, and the marriage took place in 1089. At first the great disparities between this ill-assorted couple were not very evident. They had been united together with the idea of facing a common foe, and every opportunity of so doing was speedily afforded them.

Henry, furious at the news, set to work to despoil Matilda of the lands north of the Alps that she had

inherited from her mother, and he succeeded, according to Domnizo, in capturing all her strong places there, except a castle called 'Brigerino.'[1] Then he collected a large army, and in the spring of 1090 he marched down into Italy and straight on to Mantua, which he assailed vigorously.[2]

If we could transport ourselves back to the Mantua of those days, the first thing that would strike us, viewing the city from the outside, would be its singular lack of defence, for no walls surrounded it, only wooden palisades! Yet the great stretches of water on all sides protected the city, since it was only at certain points that it could be approached by any large force, and those approaches were overlooked and guarded by the high towers which the men of the Middle Ages loved to erect in their towns and at their gates. In the old towns of Italy we can still see the remains of these towers, lowered mostly now to the level of the surrounding roofs. In Florence, Siena, and in Rome they are to be met with; at Lucca, Bologna, and at little San Gimignano on the hill, many of them stand at their full height even to the present day. Mantua possessed such towers besides its wooden palisades, and was not so easy to capture as would at first appear. It must also be remembered that Henry had no artillery with which to bombard it, and battering-rams, at such a distance across the water, were useless.

For some considerable time, almost a year, Mantua did resist. Matilda and Guelf hovered about the beleaguered

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. iv. It seems impossible to ascertain the whereabouts of this castle.

[2] 'Having been ten years out of Italy, he once more armed men and horses, and swore to remain seven years in Matilda's lands without giving a thought of peace.'—Dom., lib. II. cap. iv.

city, and were able now and then to throw in reinforcements and provisions. Henry grew impatient and abandoned straightforward tactics. He tried to bribe the citizens, and, to their shame be it said, he succeeded. In 1091, to the horror and dismay of their liege lady and of the Catholic party at large, Mantua threw open her gates to the Emperor.

Domnizo's lament over this act of treachery is very fine; it is perhaps the most poetical part of the whole poem. 'O Mantua!' he says,[1] 'who knows what glory thou wouldst have gained, if thou hadst kept thy gates closed to the King? Thy name would have spread over all the world, and all would have proclaimed thee strong and valiant as a second Troy, in sustaining so long a siege! and all Italian cities would have proclaimed thy sons the descendants of strong men. As the Trojans sowed death amongst the Greek phalanxes, even so used thy citizens to sow death amongst the German soldiery.

'Troy herself, hemmed in by besiegers, would never have opened her gates to the Argives, if at night-time she had not been betrayed, and given over to flames. . . .

'If thou, O Mantua, hadst kept faith with the Countess, with the help that she sent thee, thou couldst have lasted not only ten, but twenty years, without fear of the enemy. If thou hadst persevered, great peace would have come to thee; the King would soon have departed from thee, and so thou wouldst have remained dear to the Countess, by whom thou wouldst have been enriched and admirably fortified; and then thou wouldst have been the flower of her cities. . . . Would to God that thou hadst never sullied thy name thus, so miserable and disconsolate does it now appear to me!

[1] Domnizo, lib. II. cap. iv.

'There was a time when, full of good Catholics, thou used to celebrate the Easter festival of the God-Man with the most noble Matilda, whose court abounded with provisions and with donations, and yielded in courtesy to no court of the King, and now thou wilt celebrate Easter with fraudulent Germans, ardent followers of Bacchus, and lovers of all luxury! . . .

'But the King's friendship for thee will not last; he will keep none of the promises he has made; he will certainly deceive thee, and will depart from thee. Beware, therefore, of being at peace with him; it will bring thee much harm. Here is good counsel for thee; bewail this thy crime. However much thou mayest have broken ancient compacts and new laws, lament this with all thy heart, and may thy people lament it with thee! Try by the common consent of thy people to regain thy place in the heart of thy lady Matilda, that worshipper of Christ. Thus wilt thou renew thy privileges, thus wilt thou once more become resplendent with honour, and wilt regain thy rightful place, which otherwise will be lost to thee for ever.'

CHAPTER XVI

Henry assaults Ferrara, which opens its gates at once to him—Matilda's troops betrayed by Ugo di Manso and defeated at Tre Contadi—Henry besieges Montebello, which holds out for a considerable time—Makes overtures of peace—Matilda consents to consider them—Calls a council of war—Carpineta—Speeches of the Bishop of Reggio and the abbot of Canossa.

AFTER the fall of Mantua, Henry assailed Ferrara, which made no show of resistance, but capitulated at once. Then the King proceeded to ravage Matilda's lands in deadly earnest, the small towns and fortified places falling into his hands one after the other. Two alone defied him successfully, Platena and Nogara.[1] He abandoned these, therefore, and made for Minervia,[2] which, in spite of a brave defence, was starved out, to the great grief of Matilda, who lost there her cousin Frederick, Count of Moncons, son of Ludovico of Moncons and Sophia, her maternal aunt. According to Fiorentini, he has been quaintly called 'a most strenuous soldier of Christ.'[3]

All the Catholics were very much depressed by this sad news, and the fall of Minervia weighed upon their spirits. During the whole summer Matilda remained in

[1] Platina, which is now called Piadena, is in the Cremonese country, midway between Cremona and Mantua; Nogara, to the north-east of Mantua, but in the Veronese country, had a strongly fortified castle in those days, and was also the burial-place of Boniface's first wife, Richilda.

[2] Minervia, now known as Manerbia, near Brescia.

[3] See Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 246.

the Modenese and Reggian districts, strengthening her faithful castles and spying on Henry's movements. At the beginning of the winter, Henry, after establishing the bulk of his army in suitable quarters, crossed the Adige with a small company to lay waste the lands of the Marquis Azzo. Matilda, becoming aware of this, saw a great opportunity. Despatching at once with the utmost celerity a strong body of picked men under the command of a certain Marquis Ugo del Manso, she bade him cut off Henry before he had any chance of returning to his encampment, and if possible take him prisoner. If this attempt had succeeded, the Pope, Matilda, and Italy might have been freed from Henry once and for all; they could have made their own terms with Guibert, and with one stroke have gained the longed-for peace! Unfortunately it was not to be, for Ugo proved the blackest of traitors. Not only did he send messengers ahead to warn Henry, but he dallied on the way, so that when he and his men reached the King, the rest of the imperial army had had time to move up. Matilda's brave little force was cut in pieces, very few being taken prisoners. This unfortunate engagement took place at Tre Contadi—now called Tricontai—a village in the Paduan district.

Ugo del Manso, mentioned here, was a younger son of the old Marquis Azzo of Este, therefore uncle to Guelf, Matilda's husband. Domnizo, possibly out of regard to Matilda's relationship with him, omits these details, describing him as 'a man of noble lineage who acted thus, contrary to the customs of his compeers. Because,' he goes on to say, 'true nobility never commits villainous crimes.'[1] His after career proved so unworthy of his birth and

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. vi.

upbringing (' for he inherited neither the valour nor the virtues of the Estes,' writes Don Davoli),[1] that his own family finally drove him out of Italy, and he passed over into Burgundy, where we hear of him no more.

Encouraged by the Contade incident, Henry abandoned the open country and made for the higher Modenese district. The castles of Monte Morello (now called Monte Sant Antonio) and Monte Alfredo (Monte San Gemignano of to-day) fell into his hands. Then he directed his attention to Montebello (or Monteveglio),[2] the strongest and most ancient of all Matilda's fortresses in this region. So early as the year 728 it is known to have sustained a siege. It was now fully prepared to withstand Henry, and offered such brave resistance that he had to encamp about it for many months. The besieged showed the greatest courage; they made frequent sorties in conjunction with Matilda's attacks on the rear of the enemy, and their liege lady was able from time to time to introduce fresh soldiery and supplies into the stronghold, and so keep up their spirits.

The whole summer passed, and Henry still remained outside the walls. But the hearts of those within must have sunk when they heard that Guibert the antipope, with reinforcements from Rome, was on his way to join Henry's forces. Upon Guibert's arrival, possibly by his advice, Henry tried to negotiate with Matilda. The elder Guelf had come from Bavaria during the previous year to see if an adjustment between the combatants could not be arranged, but Henry's terms were found impossible, and so Guelf returned to his own dominions. Now it was Henry who tried to bring about a peace. He

[1] See notes on Domnizo (Don Davoli, p. 375).

[2] To the north-east of Bologna.

had some idea that after all the Bavarian princes might prove too strong for him in Germany, and that could he bring Matilda and Guelf to consent to an amicable settlement, his difficulties with his German subjects would be considerably lessened. He was in great hopes, too, that the distresses of her people and the representations of her vassals might move Matilda's heart to peace. He sent, therefore, an embassy to Matilda, saying that if she consented to acknowledge Guibert, he would at once raise the siege of Montebello, restore to her all her lands, and receive her into his favour with all love and affection. The King contrived that his overtures should become publicly known ; and at once all the barons and nobles implored Matilda to consider the question of coming to terms with the enemy, since they felt themselves unable to sustain much longer the terrors and hardships of the war. Matilda finally consented to deliberate upon the subject, and at Carpineta called a council of war.

The castle of Carpineta, in the heart of the Reggian Apennines, built by Matilda, and one of her favourite abiding-places, was well chosen for the rendezvous. The way to reach it was rough, tortuous, and long, and all her vassals felt they would be safe here from any sudden attack. So thither from the towns in the plains those who were still faithful made their way, Matilda from the neighbourhood of Montebello, with all her vassals and retainers. Many may have taken the opportunity of visiting their homes in passing, and reassuring anxious relatives as to their safety. For this region of the Apennines is studded to this day with the remains of fortified places, built originally against the invasion of the Huns, and then restored later to resist the Germans. On the long, winding road to Carpineta

one passes summit after summit crowned with these ruins, and the names of their lords are to be met with again and again in the documents of Matilda's days—the names of the Baise family we see most often—Alberto, Gerardo, and Raimondo. It will be remembered that Carpineta was one of the places where Gregory stayed as Matilda's guest, in the summer of 1077.

There were now assembled at Carpineta Matilda, her nobles and vassals, many bishops, and those whom Domnizo calls 'hermits,'[1] but who were probably monks. Guelf we presume was also present, though he is not mentioned by name.

Heribert, the Bishop of Reggio, a wise and able man, was inclined to take a very gloomy view of affairs, and urged upon Matilda most emphatically the wisdom of treating with Henry. He spoke at length to the council somewhat after this manner :—[2]

'I do not know, oh! most serene Lady, whether you have convened this assembly in order that we should lament together over the woes of the Catholic Church, or whether we should consider, unitedly, your interests and our own. You decided at the beginning to become the defender of the Church, and against a most powerful King you declared yourself the protector of the pontifical majesty. Your piety, no less than your admirable intrepidity in coming to such an important decision, was a matter of praise to all of us. In the first wars you fought successfully against the King, and the much underrated greatness of three Pontiffs has been upheld by you with incredible valour.

[1] See Don Tosti, lib. v. p. 299; Dom., lib. II. cap. vii.

[2] These speeches are taken from Fiorentini's account of the proceedings, but he quotes no authority for them (lib. II. p. 251 *et seq.*).

RUINS OF CARPINETA

'But upon Henry's return into Italy, your riches were dissipated and your armies destroyed, so that to-day we are in the greatest tribulation. Mantua is lost, together with so many other important places; Liguria is in open rebellion, Tuscany in a tumult, and into the very vitals of this part of Lombardy, which remains faithful to you, has entered the army of the King. In spite of this, the King offers you such advantageous terms, that he might be the vanquished party. Clearly he would not make such an offer did he not feel himself in the wrong. But still the war continues, most unhappily, and all ideas of peace are referred to with repugnance.

'Allow me, O Lady! to speak with all frankness. That Montebello sustains this siege is rather a sign of the extraordinary pertinacity of your subjects, than owing to the strength of its defences, or the quality of its garrison. That you should persist in opposing yourself to Henry is rather to be recognised as a token of your unbroken constancy to the Church, than to be considered as a mark of your following the well-ordered rules of political government. You have piously poured out untold riches for the maintenance of the persecuted Pontiffs. The churches by their goodwill have been despoiled, and sacred treasures spent to assist them. The armies of your states are exhausted by the frequency and length of these campaigns.

'The help we were led to expect from Germany, where, alas! the King is so superior to the Papal party in numbers, is as feeble as it is tardy. How much better would it be, therefore, in deciding upon a capitulation at once honourable to yourself and advantageous to the cause of religion, if you induce Henry by gentle means to a more upright frame of mind! And with all the

greater advantage, then, would the reconciliation of the King and the Church take place, if he had near him some good Catholics, instead of always being urged by schismatics, who are moved only by self-interest. Moreover, I believe that the mildness of exhortation would prove more profitable with him than the harshness of censure. Zeal for religion is truly a holy thing, but when it is well regulated, it bears the more fruit.

'We are proving at the present moment how dangerous it is to violate the laws of conscience, and the past Pontiffs are aware that instead of gaining by these means the obedience of the people, they lose rather the goodwill of their subjects. God is, without doubt, a friend of peace when it is not contrary to the dictates of conscience, and now it cannot be repugnant to you. Necessity constrains it. We have already seen provinces become deserts, cities desolate, commerce destroyed, and with these all traffic, all wealth. Every day in your states one hears of rebellion. God has shown by means of earthquakes, pestilences, and floods that these excesses displease Him. So many famous Catholics have perished, and our adversary is more alive than ever, has more followers than ever, and grows more and more victorious.

'Enough of the sacking of Italy by foreigners! Too much innocent blood has been shed. Peace is desired by all your people. The necessity of the times not only counsels it, but forces us to see that this continual bearing of arms has diminished religion amongst the Catholics, and has rendered the heretics more resolute in the fury of their pertinacity.

'You have struggled long enough, oh! most valiant Lady, you and your serene consort, to uphold the dignity of the Pontificate. You have done not only your duty,

but the impossible. Now inevitable necessity permits that we should treat with the excommunicated and heretics, however contumacious and lax they may be. It becomes ecclesiastical authority and your piety that, once and for all, a term should be put to incendiaries, profanities and rapine, and other military outrages, which have drawn upon us all the anger of God. In short, it seems to me that you and all of us have satisfied to the full, by our sufferings, every point of conscience.'

Thus spoke Heribert, and many others followed of a like mind, skilfully evading the main issue, however. It will be seen that no mention is made here of deposing Urban the rightful Pope, and yet that was what Henry required of them first, and above all things.

Suddenly there rose up the Hermit John, whom many suppose to be the abbot of Canossa. Moved with wrath at these insidious counsels, he burst forth with a passion of words :—

' And what fears, oh ! magnanimous Lady, have come to perturb the intrepidity of your spirit ? What interests of earthly principalities can compare with the unutterable bliss of Paradise ? And what are they proposing ? Are you not that Matilda who glory in the title of daughter of Peter ? are you not the same who promised to that Holy Pontiff, Gregory VII., that no created force should ever separate you from obedience to Holy Church ? And now what specious reasonings are blinding your vision ? What sort of peace can be made with the impious ? Can you treat with Henry without taking part with Guibert's idolatries ? Is the cause of God to be rendered unjust because of the prosperity of the profane ? as if the reward of the faithful should be annihilated by the greatness of earthly happiness.

'Great Lady, do not deceive yourself. It would be better to lose your kingdoms utterly than to possess them with heresy! What have the people done in the past, once infected with this poison of false dogmas? I will not give you here a catalogue of the outrages of the Arians and the Iconoclasts, since we have here under our very eyes the profanities of Henry's partisans. A Catholic cannot remain together with a heretic, and if the people are divided in their faith and in their feelings, it is impossible for them not to fall into the sin of sedition. You have proved that even a few Guibertines amongst your subjects have caused tumults, and with the tumults rebellion. Now, consider what will happen to the remainder infected by this union, if a public school were opened to Heresy? You would quickly see how from such a poisonous plant there would grow the fruits of revolution and ruin.

'Lady, there is no middle course possible. Either all your subjects must remain Catholics to increase the strength of your states, or you, with all of them, must become schismatic to destroy them. May God deliver my tongue from uttering such abominable conceits—even more your mind from receiving them!

'You will always be Catholic. God cannot but repay your religious constancy with his most efficacious protection. A most portentous victory will not fail to be granted to your faith as its inevitable consequence. From Him I announce to you, oh! great Lady—however little you hope in the help of your subjects, however scattered may be the treasures of your exchequers, all the nearer and greater will be the prodigies of Divine assistance. You will reach a happy old age. All your rebels will return to their allegiance. You will live to

see the tranquillity of the Church restored. You will end your days in peace. I read clearly the writing of these victories traced in Divine characters. Arm yourself with faith. Fight with confidence. You will conquer—you will conquer!'

As we read the impassioned speech of the fiery monk who, raising his arms on high, delivered these last prophetic words, the whole scene rises before our eyes. Carpineta's vast hall filled with that listening throng, the various prelates, monks, and priests, the warrior vassals of Matilda, worn by the long struggle, and their men-at-arms, all alike fired anew with desire for battle—they who had been more than half convinced by Bishop Heribert's courtly speech that peace was the only thing to be sought—the light on Hermit John's face reflected on those of his own particular following, and gradually diffusing over all.—In the centre of the hall, on a raised dais, Matilda, who had doubtless listened sorrowfully to all that Heribert and the others had said, until the abbot of Canossa began to speak. Now she was to give the decree; was it to be war or peace? But John's words turned the scale. There was not one man who remained unmoved, not one dissentient voice. 'Death, rather than a peace so ignominious!' was the cry of all. And Matilda, moved, even as her vassals were, broke off all negotiations with Henry, and returned with fresh vigour to the defence of Montebello.

Great stress has been laid, and rightly laid, on the Canossa incident by all historians; too little we feel on what occurred at Carpineta. For here surely was a great crisis, the turning-point, as it were, of the whole campaign—a campaign which had such far-reaching issues, that it is only with difficulty we can gauge them

at all. Had Matilda been entirely overborne by her bishops and vassals, had Guibert's faction won the day, the Church would have grown more and more licentious, more given over to the vices that so many Popes had been striving to cast out from her midst, and the progress of civilisation in Italy might have been retarded for centuries. A great principle was at stake. Its upholders were well-nigh weighed down by the darkness of despair borne upon them by the failure of that long drawn-out contest. And at the crucial moment, when they were almost giving way, a strong voice arose and told them that nothing could ever compensate for yielding to wrong. And so clearly did the voice appeal to their consciences that henceforth there was no hesitation amongst them. One and all felt that the fight was still worth while; and so back to the struggle they went.

CHAPTER XVII

Henry raises the siege of Montebello and marches upon Canossa—His discomfiture and flight—His standard captured and brought to Canossa, where it is placed in the Church of St. Apollonio—Flight of Adelaide, Henry's wife—Takes refuge with Matilda—Rebellion of Conrad, who is offered the crown of Italy—He accepts—Journey of Pope Urban to Lombardy—Welcomed by Matilda—Council of Piacenza—Separation of Guelf and Matilda in 1095—Reasons for the separation not absolutely known, though there are many plausible ones to be found—Henry's last hostility against Matilda at Nogara unsuccessful.

AFTER the Carpineta conference Matilda and her faithful followers seem to have been imbued with fresh courage, upheld by a strong, indomitable will, for Henry now redoubled his efforts to capture Montebello. He had a huge engine of war constructed, which was to have been placed close to the walls, thus enabling his soldiers to scale them. Before this plan could be carried into effect Matilda's men had seized and burnt the monster. Then Henry made a feint of retiring with part of his army to Parma, but marching across the plains he turned off suddenly to the left, intending to surprise Canossa, and thus wipe out the humiliation he had undergone twelve years before. 'Remembering the ills he had suffered there, when he stood barefoot in the snow and cold, he deemed that an opportune moment had arrived to avenge his wrongs.' [1]

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. vii.

He arrived at Caviliano, now called S. Polo d'Enza, a little village near the Enza River, and decided to march from there straight upon Canossa. Matilda had heard that he was at Caviliano, and at once descended with half her forces to Bianello, which stands together with three other castles crowning the summits of hills at the mountain entrance to one of the roads to Canossa. Bianello lies somewhat north-east of Caviliano, but the two roads from these places to Canossa converge at the foot of Monte Giumigna on the south side, and Don Davoli in his notes on Domnizo presumes that the little hill to the north of this, almost joined to it, was the Monte Lintregnano mentioned by Domnizo,[1] who says that Matilda had already arrived at Monte Giumigna while the enemy was advancing upon Monte Lintregnano, so that for some time they were pursuing parallel roads divided only by these two 'mountains'!

We can but conjecture that Matilda's object in moving down herself to Bianello with half her troops was to collect reinforcements, and possibly also with a view to attacking Henry in the rear.

In the meantime at Canossa, great excitement prevailed when news was brought that Henry with his army was so near at hand. The men-at-arms hurriedly rushed to their places, waiting the word of command, and a body of men was made ready for a sortie. In the Church of S. Apollonio, and we may gather later, on the battlements, the abbot John and his monks intoned psalms,[2] 'praying to all the saints to defend the place from the enemy. . . . The abbot prayed and the aforementioned people fought.'[3] For the sortie had taken place, and

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. vii. [2] Tosti, lib. v. p. 303.
[3] Dom., lib. II. cap. vii.

Henry's army was met with a violent onslaught before it even got in sight of Canossa. To aid the defenders, and as if in answer to the abbot's prayers, a thick autumnal fog hid the surrounding summits, and slowly enveloped all within its folds, greatly to the discomfiture of Henry and his troops. They were soon routed and forced to fly, and those of Matilda's people who came up from Bianello attacked them in the rear. The standard-bearer, son of that Marquis Oberto who was killed at Sorbara, was overwhelmed, Henry's standard captured from him, and subsequently borne in triumph to Canossa, where with other trophies of war it was dedicated by Matilda to S. Apollonio, and hung in the church.

Perched upon the ridge of a hill midway between Bianello and Canossa, and plainly visible from the former, is a small oratory dedicated to the 'Madonna della Battaglia.' Tradition has it that Matilda built this on the exact spot where the engagement took place. But Professor Ferretti points out that this small chapel is situated some two miles from Canossa[1]; it may be conjectured, therefore, that the force from Bianello met the rearguard of Henry's army here, and fought with them, and that there were two separate engagements on that day; one quite close to Canossa, almost under its walls; the other at some distance, at the spot where the oratory now stands. Domnizo says further that after his discomfiture Henry spent the night at Baiano (a small village called to day Bibbiano, lying some four miles north of Quattro Castellà), and that after that one night he fled hastily across the Po, and 'from henceforth year by year he saw his power diminish.'[2]

After this fruitless attempt to storm Canossa, Henry's

[1] *Canossa, Studie e Ricerche*, p. 110-112. [2] Dom., lib. II. cap. vii.

power in Italy never again reasserted itself, and now troubles of another nature—retribution surely for private misdoings—overtook him. In 1088 his first wife, the gentle Bertha, had died, and in the following year he married Adelaide, or Praxed,[1] as she is sometimes called, widow of Marquis Henry of the Northmark, and the daughter of a Russian duke. He soon tired of her and began to treat her shamefully, and finally imprisoned her in a dungeon at Verona.

Serious quarrels ensued with his sons, and towards Conrad, the elder one—him who, as a baby, had made that terrible journey across the mountains in his mother's arms—Henry seemed to evince a particular hatred. Conrad differed from his father in every respect; high-principled, gentle, brave and courteous, he could not countenance Henry's evil ways. A great part of his boyhood had been spent in Italy, and early in 1092 he had been sent to Piedmont as vicar imperial, to put forward the claims of the imperial house to the estates of Savoy, Adelaide of Susa, their ruler, having died a short while previously, December 1091.[2] In Italy Conrad had won much love and admiration. It is not known exactly what had occurred between father and son, but it is said that Conrad had been in communication both with the Pope and Matilda, and perhaps driven to desperation by his father's unnatural conduct, he had signified his intention of joining the Catholic party.

[1] Her name was Eupraxis or Praxed, and was changed in Saxony to Adelaide.

[2] Adelaide's sons had died before her, and there were two principal claimants to her estates. Conrad himself, through his mother Beatrice, Adelaide's daughter, and a very young son of Matilda's cousin Frederick (see page 221), and of a granddaughter of Adelaide. See Giesebrecht, vol. iii. p. 648 *et seq.*

Henry, on his return to Germany, hearing of his son's defection, confined him in prison, whence, however, he managed to escape to Italy. By the consent of the Pope, Conrad was offered the crown of Italy, both Matilda and her husband Guelf being privy to these negotiations.

In the year 1093, therefore, Conrad was crowned King of Italy, first at Monza and then at Sant' Ambroglio at Milan. Urban the diplomatist may have thought that Italy would greatly benefit by this policy of securing for its king the son of an outlawed emperor. A certain number of Lombards wished for a king who should be of royal blood, and others would flock to his court who were jealous of the power of the Tuscan house, and it certainly placed Henry in a very bad light that his own son should accept such an honour from the Pope—the Pope that he himself had repudiated. Henry's cause was further weakened by the flight of his wife Adelaide, who with the help of Matilda and her husband escaped from her prison at Verona, and journeyed hurriedly southwards to Canossa, where Matilda received and entertained her as a most honoured guest. Nearly a hundred and fifty years previously another Queen Adelaide had taken refuge from her oppressors within those very walls. She, too, had been generously welcomed and protected. And so Matilda maintained the traditions of her house, and this poor Adelaide could feel she was as safe and sheltered as her predecessor had been.

Italy was now making a decided effort to gain its freedom from the yoke of foreign rule, and we have at this time the record of the first of those famous ' Lombard Leagues,' of which we hear so much at a later date.[1] We are told that Guelf and Matilda entered into a twenty

[1] Don Tosti, lib. v. p. 309.

years' league against Henry with the cities of Milan, Cremona, Lodi, and Piacenza. This shows very plainly how the towns were growing in power, gradually casting off the vestiges of their feudal allegiance, and beginning to regard themselves as separate entities.[1] At the same time that this compact was agreed upon, Matilda and her husband were given the guardianship of the Alpine passes to prevent any incursions on the part of Henry.

Further south Henry's partisans were diminishing in number, and in Rome itself Guibert was gradually becoming aware that his cause was hopeless, for now the only place of any importance within the city that he retained was the castle of St. Angelo; all the other strong places had opened their gates to Urban, and the Pope was able once more to inhabit the Lateran palace, and to celebrate Christmas as Pope indeed. Shortly afterwards he undertook to pay a visit to France, and Matilda was very anxious that he should stay some time in Lombardy on his way. It was thought a fitting time for him to visit the north of Italy, and to encourage by his presence those cities whose inhabitants were now anxious to acknowledge him as Pope in place of Guibert. Early in 1095, therefore, he left Rome and was welcomed by Matilda 'as if he had been St. Peter,' says Domnizo. It must have been a joy to her to feel she could once more receive the Holy Father, and together they could discuss the affairs of a peaceful instead of a warring Church. On the other hand, there were matters to be discussed which more directly concerned Matilda, and

[1] About this time a further sign appeared of the increasing liberties of the citizens, for in the year 1095 many cities began to elect their own magistrates without the sanction of bishop or count. These magistrates were called *Consuls* (see Abbate, p. 176).

which were of a disturbing nature to her own peace, as will presently be seen.

In the meantime a council was arranged to take place at Piacenza, and such vast multitudes thronged to it that no building could contain them, and they had to meet in the open fields outside the city. It must have been a proud moment for Urban when he came forward to address that vast concourse, and a glad moment for Matilda to know that her fidelity to the cause of the Church had met with its reward. Here were present two hundred bishops from Italy, Burgundy, France and Bavaria, four thousand clerics, and thirty thousand laymen, Matilda and Guelf her husband, and the Empress Adelaide. Canons for the establishing of Church discipline were reinforced, the affairs of Christendom and the great burning question of a holy war against the infidels were discussed (of the latter we shall speak more anon).

The injured Empress then made known her wrongs, and proclaimed aloud in open council the misdoings of her husband with no reticence whatever. By many she was blamed for this lack of reserve, while others saw in it a motive—to move the hearts of the people to yet greater indignation against Henry, and thus to gain more adherents for Conrad, her stepson, who had always treated her with the greatest chivalry and respect, and for whom she cherished a very true affection.

Pope Urban journeyed slowly through Lombardy, and was everywhere well received. At Cremona, Conrad came forth to meet him and pay him all honour, and then and there tendered his oath of allegiance to the Church. It was arranged by the Pope that a marriage should take place between the young King and a daughter of

Roger, the conqueror of Sicily, brother of Robert Guiscard. Before Pope Urban left Italy he was able to attend and bless the nuptials at Pisa, where the ceremony took place with great pomp and magnificence.

Yet while the negotiations for this marriage were proceeding—possibly at the very time that it took place—the untying of that other marriage Pope Urban had brought about, the question of Matilda's divorce, in fact, must have been very fully discussed. No historian tells us what opinion Urban expressed, what advice he gave. Only the fact is mentioned that Matilda and Guelf separated some time after the Council of Piacenza in 1095. There had been differences and dissensions between them already, and feeling that matters might come to an unpleasant crisis, early in that same year the elder Guelf, Matilda's father-in-law, had come down into Italy and endeavoured to smooth away the differences, dreading the effects of an open breach. But his diplomatic efforts were of no avail, and the separation took place. The reasons given are many; perhaps none of them contain the whole truth. The one historian who might have told us something with certainty of the matter is Domnizo, but he is silent on the subject of both Matilda's marriages—out of consideration to her feelings with regard to these painful incidents of her life, or because he felt that his heroine does not appear in a very favourable light.[1] Some writers declare that both marriages were so in name only, and that Guelf soon tired of occupying a secondary position beside a woman twice his age, who would not consent to give him an equal share in administering the affairs of her states. Others say that Matilda, accustomed for years to com-

[1] See Don Davoli's notes on Domnizo, p. 353.

mand alone, could ill brook a consort who desired not only an equal right to rule, but who wished to take the leading part. There is a document extant granting some privileges to the people of Mantua which goes to prove that Guelf arrogated to himself the supreme place in the government, for it begins thus: 'Welfo Dei gratia Dux et Marchio, et Mathilda Dei gratia si quid est.'[1]

It is easily understood that the natural consequences of such an ill-assorted union would be eventual separation, that dissensions and quarrels would emphasise themselves the more, as time went on, and the pressing need that had brought these two together ceased to exist. Guelf was so much younger than his wife, and evidently not a strong character, tactless, hasty, and eager to assume a prominent part in the government and administration of Matilda's states. This she resented, and he wounded her pride and reserve, till at last her proud spirit could bear the strain no longer,[2] and an entire severance of this unnatural bond seemed to her the only possible course. To any one who has studied Matilda's character as closely as is possible from the meagre details that have come down to our own days, the divorce from Guelf seems to reveal a consistent trait of character. She had too much virility to tolerate a weak man who possessed no strength of purpose. She had been accustomed all her life to act decisively, and so she acted now. Let those who would blame her remember that it was only natural and human that she should have 'les défauts de ses qualités.'

Yet, on the other hand, it is to be admitted that her father-in-law had some show of reason on his side when

[1] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 244, who quotes from Mario Equicola, and probably referred to in Overman, p. 156.

[2] See Tosti, lib. v. cap. v.

he expressed indignation at her conduct, and felt himself both injured and mortified. So long as he and his son had been necessary to Matilda, he said, she had kept her own counsel, and had accepted all they had to offer in the way of devotion to the Papal cause, and troops wherewith to meet the Emperor. Once Henry and his party were entirely weakened, and the Bavarian alliance was no longer of great importance, Matilda took the first opportunity of ridding herself of an uncongenial husband, remembering nothing they had done in her defence, disregarding the marriage contract, allowing of no compromise, and thereby casting a slur on him and on his family. He, the old Guelf, was so embittered against Matilda, that he certainly must have thought her more to blame than his son. Muratori is of opinion that it was expressly promised to him in the marriage contract,[1] and with the assent of the Holy See, that his son should inherit Matilda's possessions, and failing direct heirs, the Este family after him, and this in spite of Matilda's having made a secret donation of her lands to the Church.

The whole question is somewhat obscure and very difficult to follow. It is certain, however, that after Matilda's death the Este family laid claim to her lands. Muratori also says that the descendants of Guelf IV. (Matilda's father-in-law) succeeded in time in obtaining some of her possessions, and one would imagine, therefore, that there must have been some justice in their claim.

In the meantime, the old Duke Guelf, finding that a reconciliation was impossible, retired into Germany. Having entirely abandoned the Catholic party, he appealed to Henry to help him against Matilda. Henry

[1] *Delle Antichità Estensi ed Italiane*, vol. i. p. 20.

was at Verona at this time with a miserable following of men, but upon hearing of the quarrel between Matilda and the family of Este, he thought this would be a fitting opportunity to strike one last blow at his old enemy.

Gathering together what forces he could, he marched against Matilda's castle of Nogara, and proceeded to besiege it. Matilda, hearing of this attempt, despatched a strong body of Modenese to fight the King. Henry's spirit must have greatly changed, for, upon the approach of Matilda's men, he offered no show of resistance, but fled incontinently, abandoning all his baggage and belongings, which fell into the hands of his adversaries. This was the last show of fight ever made by Henry in Italy. Since his reconciliation with the Guelfs the Alpine passes were once more free, and he was able to cross the mountains unmolested. In the year 1097, therefore, he left Italy never to return again. He met with little or no opposition as he re-entered his German dominions, and gradually the situation improved. He became reconciled with some of his old enemies, and his friends began to rally round him.

All Henry's paternal affection, alienated as it was from his elder son, now seems to have been lavished on the younger, Henry. At a council assembled at Mainz (May 1098), the latter was proclaimed heir to the kingdom, and Conrad deprived of the rights of succession. A few months later (January 1099), at Aachen, Henry caused this boy of sixteen to be crowned King, and the nobles swore fealty to him, although he was made to take a solemn oath never to interfere in the government or usurp the rights of the kingdom so long as his father lived. This oath he swore upon the crucifix and the holy lance, at his coronation.

CHAPTER XVIII

The beginnings of the Crusades—Aspirations of Gregory VII.—His letters to Henry in 1074—Forced to abandon the idea—Development under Pope Urban II. at Councils of Piacenza and Claremont—Urban appeals to all true warriors to fight for the Holy Sepulchre—Departure from Lucca of the Crusaders in 1095—Halt in Rome and disillusionment of many who turn back—Capture of Jerusalem—Death of Urban, 1099.

THE one great subject which was filling men's minds towards the end of the eleventh century, the idea of a campaign against the infidels who infested Palestine and oppressed the Christians of the East, has so absorbed the attention of Matilda's biographers at this period, that they neglect Matilda herself, to tell us of the beginning of the Crusades. And yet we cannot wonder at this, since, indirectly as well as directly, the great Tuscan princess helped to foster and carry on the development of this idea. More than twenty years previously Gregory had made known to his intimate friends the cherished wish of his heart to free the land of the Holy Sepulchre from the dominion of the unbeliever, and we do not doubt that in his long intercourse with Matilda he frequently discussed the question with her, and expressed his desire to embark on an expedition against the infidel possessors of Palestine.

This wish was formulated in an open letter to Henry, written December 1074—just after Beatrice had returned from her mission of peace to Germany, and when Henry

showed himself in a very submissive mood: 'The Christians from overseas, of whom the greater number are massacred daily, like helpless flocks of sheep, have humbly sent to ask me to succour them, our brothers, so that the Christian faith of to-day may not be entirely annihilated (which God forbid). And I, moved with so great sorrow that I desire death—for I would rather give my life than abandon them— . . . have tried to excite and animate all Christians to defend the law of Christ, to sacrifice their lives for their brother, and to cause to shine forth the nobility of the children of God. The Italians and those beyond the mountains have, by the inspiration of God, accepted my counsels most willingly. Already fifty thousand men are prepared (if they can have me as chief and as pontiff in this expedition) to rise in arms against the enemies of God, and to reach the sepulchre of the Lord under my guidance.'[1] Then with a touch of great confidence in the young King's sincerity and wish to amend his ways, Gregory goes on to say that if God permits him to undertake this enterprise, he would leave the care of the Church to Henry. We know how much this confidence was misplaced. The fifty thousand men that Gregory had assembled under Gisulf of Salerno in the woods of the Ciminian hill above Viterbo had to be disbanded and sent to their homes. The affairs of the Church in Europe were in too troublous a condition to admit of Gregory's leaving Italy, and he had with great regret to abandon all hopes of leading a Crusade to the East.

We have little doubt that his hopes, his regrets, his ideas were kept in memory by Matilda, and that she

[1] *Reg.*, vol. ii. p. 31 (7th Dec. 1074). See also Villemain, vol. i. pp. 446-447.

managed to stimulate his successor to take some active steps in promoting a holy war. Moved by Pope Victor's words, and perhaps not wholly with disinterested motives, the Genoese and Pisans led a crusade against the Saracens of Africa; but the war ended in nothing, and the Holy Land itself was no nearer freedom.

Yet for all those twenty years the seed had been germinating, and under Pope Urban was to grow and bring forth a mighty harvest, both of good and evil fruit. Now that the peace of Italy was restored, the schism in the Church all but dead, and the dreaded enemy's power lessened, the Pope could devote himself entirely to the development of his great predecessor's idea. For Urban's preaching came exactly at the right moment, and the minds of men were ready to listen to his exhortations and to act on them. As the war in Italy had ceased, there were great numbers of warriors idle for the moment, a great surplus of energy all over Europe. The feudal system, which rendered the carrying of arms an obligation on men of noble birth, had gradually evolved the institution of knighthood, with its chivalrous code, bringing help and succour to the injured and oppressed.

This Crusade offered an unbounded scope for the great army of the knights of Christendom to wield their arms in the noblest of all causes. Moreover, it appealed to every one, each in his different way, and fired the imagination of all. It offered an ideal campaign for the good and noble, a wide field of enterprise to the ambitious, and remission of sins to the ungodly. When, therefore, Pope Urban addressed the vast multitude at Piacenza, demanding their aid for the Holy War, when he spoke later with such eloquence at Claremont, his words fell on ears eager and willing to receive them, and he appealed

to the people exactly in the right way; the great inducement he held out was that by fighting thus against the infidel, they could make atonement for their sins.

At the Council of Piacenza there were present the envoys of Alexius Comnenus, the Byzantine emperor, who were able to excite further indignation against the infidels by the accounts they gave, of brutal massacres of Christians and pilgrims.

At Claremont, where another great council was held, the whole mass of people were moved by one impulse, and the shout of 'God wills it!' 'God wills it!' continually interrupted the Pope. Men poured forth their riches, and brought their vassals to fight as well, and bound red crosses on their arms, swearing never to return to their native land until the pagans had been driven from Jerusalem. Urban had struck the right chord. The Pope's appeal to the wicked is specially striking:[1] 'Rise, turn your weapons, dripping with the blood of your brothers, against the enemy of the Christian faith. You oppressors of orphans and widows, you murderers, you violators of churches, you robbers of the property of others, you who accept money to shed the blood of Christians, you who, like vultures, are drawn by the scent of the battlefield, hasten, as you love your souls, and your Captain Christ, to the rescue of Jerusalem. All you who are guilty of such sins as exclude you from the kingdom of God, ransom yourselves at this price, for such is the will of God.'

The enthusiasm excited by Urban's preaching was unbounded, and forthwith vast armies prepared themselves to start in the following spring. We are sure that Matilda stimulated her vassals to take part in this holy

[1] Gregorovius, vol. iv. p. 332 (Italian ed.).

warfare, and we know that by her leave and sanction great numbers of the citizens of both Genoa and Pisa made themselves ready.[1] Vedriani tells us that she raised seven thousand men from her cities of Parma, Cremona, Modena, Reggio, and others, and gave their leadership to Palamede Beccaria, while the captains of the Modenese soldiery were Fabrio and Riniero Rangone and Filippo Boschetti, ' warriors of great renown.' [2]

In returning from France in November of 1096, Urban was met by Matilda at Cremona, and together they proceeded to Lucca, where the whole of the magnificent army of French, Norman, and English Crusaders had arrived to receive the blessing of the Pope before journeying southwards to Bari, where they were to set sail. These forces were commanded by Hugues de Vermandois, brother of the King of France, Stephen of Blois, Robert of Flanders, the two brothers Godfrey and Eustace of Bouillon, and Robert of Normandy, Matilda's whilom suitor. We can picture this gallant army of warriors encamped outside the walls of Lucca, with the white banners emblazoned with the red cross flying gaily from the tents, while within the city, the princes and their knights were entertained by Matilda. And the memory of the impressive ceremony of the blessing of the Crusaders' arms by the Pope, and the presentation of the banner of St. Peter to Prince Hugh, must have remained for long in the minds of the Lucchese, as one of the brightest and most beautiful pageants they had ever witnessed !

Yet of this gallant army how few were destined to see Jerusalem ! Six hundred thousand men in all, we are told, departed on this first Crusade, and only forty

[1] See Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 268. [2] Ved., vol. ii. p. 64.

PORTRAIT OF MATILDA

FROM THE FRESCO ABOVE HER TOMB AT S. BENEDETTO POLIRONE

thousand reached the Holy City. Many fought and perished on the way, and some turned back, disillusioned and horror-struck, before quitting Italy. For Pope Urban begged the departing princes to tarry awhile in Rome on their way to Bari, and strike a blow in his own cause. They were going to help the Holy City ; would they not first succour the city which had become the Mother of Holy Church, and drive out its schismatic oppressors ? The leaders consented, and upon reaching Rome they managed to expel the Guibertines from St. Peter's and wrest from them many of their strongholds, at the same time forcing Guibert himself to leave Rome.

The warriors from France and Italy, filled with holy zeal, and reverencing the Church and the Pope, must have been struck with horror and amazement at the anarchy and disorder prevailing in Rome, and many turned back in consequence. An eye-witness (Fulcher Carnotensis [1]) tells us how Guibert's followers robbed the votive offerings from off the altars in St. Peter's, and climbed up on the beams of the church to throw down stones on the worshippers, and were quite prepared to murder any of Urban's adherents.

It was not till after two years more had passed, two years of excessive hardships and fighting, that the Crusaders' goal was reached, and the crown of their ambition realised, for on the 15th of July 1099 Jerusalem fell into their hands and the Holy Sepulchre was theirs. The Pope, smitten with a fatal illness, passed away on the twenty-ninth day of the same month, and although the news could not actually have reached him, he must have realised that victory was near, and have breathed a sigh of relief that his life had not been lived in vain, that he

[1] See Gregorovius, vol. iv. p. 337-38 (Italian ed.).

had, to the best of his ability, executed a great idea handed on to him by the loyalty and devotion of the 'faithful daughter of St. Peter,' as transmitted to her by Gregory.

If we look back to Carpineta, that supreme crisis in the struggle between the Pope and Emperor, and if we think what Rome and Italy might have become had Matilda and her vassals yielded to Henry—Italy an appanage of the German royal house, Rome subservient to its head, the whole power of the Papacy, and all it stood for in those days, weakened perhaps for centuries, we can realise that, but for Matilda's grand and persistent courage in upholding the Papacy at such a time, the Crusades would never have taken place, the whole subsequent development of chivalry, the commercial activity of Europe, its learning and its enlightenment, would have been retarded for many centuries.

CHAPTER XIX

Election of Paschal II.—Death of Antipope Guibert in 1100—Matilda promotes the founding of the School of Jurisprudence at Bologna, and appoints Irnerius to codify the Laws of Justinian—Restores and beautifies S. Apollonio at Canossa—The story of the spurs—Cardinal Bernard is made her director and vicar of the Pope in Lombardy—Matilda renews her donation to the Roman Church in 1102—Visit of Anselm of Canterbury to Matilda's court—Revolt of Ferrara and Parma—The translation of the body of San Geminiano in Modena—Two miniature portraits of Matilda in the MS. which gives an account of this ceremony.

IMMEDIATELY after Urban's death, Rainerius, cardinal of San Clemente, was elected Pope under the name of Paschal II. He had been raised to the dignity of cardinal by Gregory VII., had shown himself a most zealous disciple of the great Pope, and was looked upon as a leader in Church reform. Great things were hoped of him, but subsequent events proved that these expectations would never be realised. Rainerius had shown himself capable, energetic, and resolute as cardinal—as Pope the weaknesses of his character became manifest, and the world was soon to see how little he was fitted to meet the difficulties and responsibilities that the highest office in the Church bore in its train. He made a brave start, however. Vedriani[1] tells us that 'cordial letters were interchanged between the new Pope and Matilda,' and 'he did not delay a moment in sending her the apostolic benediction,' and that he also wrote

[1] Ved., vol. ii. p. 64.

to tell her that he had determined once and for all to put an end to Guibert's schism, and called for help from her. A goodly army was collected together, with Matilda's aid and that of Roger of Sicily, for the latter had sent the Pope substantial help in the shape of a large sum of money. With this, troops could be raised, and forthwith a plan of campaign was organised.

For some years Guibert's bands of followers had been dwindling ; even in Ravenna his power was on the wane. Men were growing weary of the strife between Pope and antipope, occupied as they were now with the all-engrossing subject of the Crusade. At the election of Rainerius, however, the schismatics rallied round Guibert. He made an effort to reassert himself, coming down from the north to Albano, where he hoped to offer stout resistance to the Papal forces. But Albano was captured ; Guibert fled to Sutri, from thence to Civita Castellana, where he died (September 1100). He had known how to make a resolute stand in favour of a doomed cause, and his courageous efforts seemed worthy of a better aim. After a while miracles were reported to be wrought at his grave, and so much did these rumours excite Pope Paschal's alarm lest the schism should be renewed, that he commanded that the bones of the former antipope should be thrown into the Tiber.[1]

With Guibert's death the party of the schismatics were left without a capable head, and although two antipopes were speedily elected, one after the other, to fill his place, they were as speedily disposed of by Pope Paschal—condemned to relinquish their barren honours and end their days in monasteries in the south of Italy, and it was not long before Paschal was universally

[1] Gregorovius, vol. iv. p. 318. See also Ved., vol. ii. p. 64 *et seq.*

acknowledged as supreme head of the Church and lawful successor to St. Peter.

The next few years passed peacefully enough for Matilda, and she occupied them in visiting the different cities of her states, redressing grievances, making donations to various churches and abbeys which had suffered during the times of war, and generally conferring benefits on her people.

Here we may notice a very important work of Matilda's, probably undertaken about this time, namely, the founding and fostering of the great school of jurisprudence at Bologna, which for many centuries gave great renown to that famous university. Hitherto there had been much confusion in Italy regarding the practice of the law, since the various barbarian conquerors had brought with them their own laws, and in many parts of the country the old Roman code was well-nigh forgotten. At the beginning of the eleventh century, however, there existed at Ravenna a flourishing school of law which had been grafted on to the root of the old Roman law, and which was modified somewhat by the necessities of the feudal system. The lawyers of Ravenna were to be met with everywhere, and had attained great notability. But since Ravenna was a very hotbed of heresy and had been the headquarters of the great antipope Guibert, it was most important that there should be another school of law to prepare advocates for Matilda's domains in particular. She employed a certain scholar, Irnerius (Guarniero or Werner,[1] as he is severally called), to collect and rearrange the well-nigh forgotten code of Justinian,[2] and

[1] Muratori, Dissert. sulle antichità italiane, xliv.

[2] 'Dominus Irnerius at the request of the Countess Matilda renewed the books of the Laws which had been long neglected, and in accordance with the manner in which they had been compiled by the Emperor Justinian

did all in her power to promote and encourage the revival of the study of the Roman law. It must not be forgotten that to a great feudal ruler like Matilda some knowledge of law and its workings would be very essential. She had teachers, and prompters, and helpers, no doubt, but one of her functions as ruler was to preside at the courts of law and pronounce judgment. In the early days Matilda would always be present to pass sentence when any important case was being tried, but as time went on, the judges were given more power. Matilda could not preside at every court of justice throughout her dominions. Her wars and urgent political affairs often demanded her presence elsewhere, so gradually it was arranged that the proceedings should be terminated by the judges alone—and even when in later days she presided in person, it was only to give her assent to the verdict they had already formulated. It will be seen, therefore, that even in the matter of the administration of the law, the towns gradually acquired the power of acting for themselves.

It was probably about this time that Matilda did so much to enlarge Canossa and to beautify the church, of which Domnizo writes with such pride. He tells us in his dedicatory letter, how Matilda caused rich and precious marbles to be brought to Canossa wherewith to embellish the tombs of her ancestors. Then in the poem he calls down blessings from above on Matilda. 'Oh! Thou who numberest the stars!' he writes (as if Canossa spoke), 'grant a long life to the sublime Matilda! and when she is taken from this world, grant that her body

of divine memory, arranged them in divisions, adding perchance between the lines a few words here and there.'—Richard Uspergensis, quoted by Rashdall, vol. i. chap. ii. p. 116.

may be buried here! One mausoleum only holds the remains of her great ancestors and their wives, but I love her even more than her ancestors, because she has exalted me, and manifested great affection towards me; in Rome, thanks to her, my name has sounded gloriously, and by continually raising new towers, she renders me more strong and beautiful!'

It is interesting to note at this time how much the desire for beauty was growing, and how the cities of northern Italy manifested this desire by raising magnificent stately cathedrals, and how eagerly the citizens concurred in this work.[1] Perhaps the wish here expressed and developed was yet another mark of their increasing individuality and independence; in any case, all these great buildings received most substantial help from Matilda. In January of the year 1100 she was in the neighbourhood of Pisa,[2] where she took special care to legislate for the chapter-house, confirming it in the possession of its lands, and taking care to free the people inhabiting these lands from various grievous taxes. Another special work of her bounty was the donation of a large piece of ground adjacent to her palace at Pisa, to help towards the building of the cathedral, with the understanding that the rent obtained from it should be employed in completing the cathedral, and afterwards should be used for its maintenance. With the same object, in 1105 she made further donations of the 'court and castle' of Papiano, the 'court and castle' of Livorno, and a piece of ground outside the walls of Pisa.[3] In the registers all over her dominions there still exist the records of monasteries—in Florence, Guastalla, Carpineta,

[1] Dom., lib. II., Introduction. [2] Overman, p. 167.
[3] Overman, pp. 171-172.

and elsewhere—which she took under her protection, and upon which she bestowed most generous gifts.

One little anecdote, illustrating her impulsive generosity, has been handed down to us. One day she was with a hunting-party in the neighbourhood of Ferrara, and in the eagerness of the chase she became separated from her attendants, and found herself towards the middle of the day quite close to the abbey of S. Bartolomeo. Dismounting from her horse, she knocked at the gate and asked permission to rest awhile. The monks, highly honoured by the presence of so great a lady, begged her to share with them the midday meal, which was then being prepared. While she was conversing with the abbot, the monastery bell began to ring as a summons to table, and struck with the particularly harsh note of the bell, which was cracked, she asked the abbot why he did not replace it with a more musical one. 'Alas!' said the abbot, 'the brethren and I are poor in this world's goods; we have no money for a new bell.' Matilda stooped down, and removing from her boots her golden begemmed spurs, presented them to the abbot. 'Father, accept these,' she said. 'They will purchase you another bell.' The monks named the beautiful new bell which was cast and placed in the monastery tower, 'the Spurs,' and on it there was moulded a tiny pair of spurs and an inscription recording Matilda's generous gift.[1]

Pope Paschal, remembering possibly that since Anselm's death, Matilda had been without any ghostly counsellor of note, sent Bernard, the cardinal-abbot of Vallombrosa, into Lombardy as his vicar-general, with special instructions to confer with and advise Matilda.

[1] This story from Ughelli, *Italia Sacra*, tom. ii. col. 561. See also Ferretti, pp. 138-139.

A great and true affection developed between these two. Cardinal Bernard, a man of saintly life and character, was in all respects worthy to become Matilda's director. His name is often associated with Matilda's in her deeds of donation, either as a witness or to sanction them, and the great Countess and her counsellor must have travelled about incessantly in Lombardy attending to ecclesiastical and political affairs. For instance, we hear of them together at Mantua, when by Bernard's advice the care of the poor at the hospital of S. Andrea was taken from the monks of that abbey, since they had used the revenues of the hospital for worldly purposes, and was confided to the monastery of S. Benedetto Polirone, which had maintained the very best of reputations throughout all the troublous times of the schism.

In the year 1102, while Bernard was visiting Matilda at Canossa, the latter renewed the donation of her lands to Holy Church, which, according to Domnizo, she had originally made in 1077 when Gregory was with her at Canossa. A copy of this document still exists in the Vatican, in which it is stated that the original parchment was lost.[1]

And here in passing we may note the fact that somewhere before, or in, the year 1099, Matilda had adopted Guido Guerra, a son of Count Guido Guerra, a Tuscan noble of some note.[2] Guido the father had earned the sobriquet of 'Guerra,' probably from his warlike character, and henceforth Guerra became an integral part of the family name. He was evidently an intimate friend of Matilda, and was associated with her, not only in many deeds of charity, but also as judge at some of her courts of law. In 1072, for instance, he assisted her in

[1] See Appendix G.

[2] See Overman, p. 165.

Florence in pronouncing judgment in favour of the nuns of Santa Felicità.

He was overlord of Pistoja, and must have owned vast lands in Tuscany, for in 1081 he bestowed the celebrated pine forest on the abbey of Vallombrosa, and in 1090 an immense chestnut wood, on the same brotherhood.

His son seems to have inherited both his father's generosity and valour. He took part in the war against the infidels (at what date is not known), as is evidenced by a document of 1100. He shared in many of the charities of the great Countess, but little is known as to the manner of this adoption. In a document of 1099 he describes himself thus: 'I, Guido, Count, called Guerra, son of Count Guido, adopted son of the Lady, Countess Matilda.' Repetti surmises that she, Matilda, may have acted as his sponsor, and 'held him in baptism at the sacred font.'[1] Litta tells us that he was known as 'the Marquis,' on account of this adoption, and says further: 'He was destined to be her heir, but other motives induced the Countess to bequeath her estates to the Papacy.'[2] After 1106 his name disappears from the documents, either as witness to or joint-donor in her charities. He died in 1124, a few years after Matilda herself. There is no evidence that he benefited in any way by the adoption. His descendants were known as the 'Guidi di Romagna.'

In March 1103 we hear of Cardinal Bernard and Matilda at Panciano, near Nonantula,[3] and there Matilda made splendid restitution to the abbey of Nonantula for the treasure it had given to the Holy See, when Gregory VII. and she herself were so sore beset that their

[1] Repetti, vol. vi. Appendice, pp. 41, 42. [2] Litta, vol. ii. tavola 2.
[3] See Tiraboschi, *Storia di San Silvestro di Nonantula.*

own resources were at an end. Much land, several churches and castles in the Ferrarese district, with all their incoming revenues, were now bestowed upon the faithful abbey.

In the autumn of this same year there came to Matilda's court a visitor from far-off England—none other than Anselm, the famous Archbishop of Canterbury, on his way back from Rome, where he had been to lay his case before the Pope. That he was received with the greatest courtesy and given a safe-conduct through Matilda's territories is evident from the letter he addressed to her after his return to France in November 1103, accompanied by a copy of his *Meditations*. In the letter he thanks her for the motherly care and friendliness she manifested towards him.[1] Matilda was evidently much struck with Anselm's ability, and his personality must have made a great impression on her, since later, in 1104-5,[2] she wrote most warmly in his cause to Pope Paschal, declaring it a shame that so worthy a member of the Roman Church should be set on one side by that Church, and bidding Pope Paschal remember Anselm's loyal services, urgently begging him to take up the matter without loss of time, and set it right. Even before this, some years previously, when Anselm had first arrived in Rome, Matilda had evinced her belief in the justice of his cause by sending Rainerius, Bishop of Lucca, to the special council convened by Pope Urban II. in Rome to inquire into the question of Anselm's differences with William Rufus. Rainerius warmly upheld the exiled archbishop, and spoke at great length in his favour, though nothing

[1] Overman, p. 172.

[2] Overman, p. 174, but he is not correct in saying that the text of this letter is to be found in Gerberon's collection of Anselm's *Works*; only the two first lines are there. See Appendix F.

definite came of it. Although Anselm was an Italian by birth, his name is so intimately associated with our own land, and our own city of Canterbury, that we cannot but feel a very special interest in this little incident in Matilda's life, and a glow of gratitude for her warm defence of an injured man, who had so few to plead for him, and who, in England, had made himself one with the cause for which Gregory fought so long—the questions of simony and investitures.

Two minor rebellions occurred in Matilda's country during these years—at Ferrara and at Parma. Ferrara saw occasion to revolt just after the death of Conrad, the young King of Italy, which took place in Florence in the year 1102. A malignant report was spread abroad that Matilda's physician had poisoned him, owing to a recent quarrel between the King and the great Countess ! Most historians tell us of the quarrel, but they also mention that a reconciliation took place early in 1102, and the report was only circulated by Matilda's enemies, since whatever may have been the differences between them (and their origin is not known), Matilda and Conrad had again been on the most friendly terms, as is evidenced by his leaving Lombardy and visiting Matilda in Florence, where the fatal fever attacked him. He was buried in the old cathedral with great pomp and every honour.

Immediately afterwards the news was brought to Matilda that Ferrara was in a state of rebellion, and so, collecting an army, she at once journeyed across the Apeninnes, and arrived in time to join forces with her allies the Venetians, and the people of Ravenna, who, hearing of the trouble in Ferrara, came in all haste to her assistance, and the outbreak was speedily quelled.[1]

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. ix.

The affair at Parma was of a more serious nature, insomuch as acts of rebellion and sacrilege were committed by the infuriated people, and they had little or no excuse for the violence of their deeds. Parma had been a seat of heresy since the days of Cadalous the great antipope. The inhabitants were not yet freed from the taint of the schism, and did not love their liege lady; indeed they do not like to think even to this day that they were ever Matilda's subjects.[1]

In the year 1104 Parma was still only half-hearted in its devotion to the rightful Pope, and had secret leanings towards imperial rule. However, in spite of these tendencies, a number of the leading citizens sent a deputation to Bernard, the Pope's vicar-general, inviting him to come and celebrate the Feast of the Assumption within the city. In the hopes of stimulating the people's faith, and full of zeal towards the Pope and the Church, Bernard repaired to Parma. Unfortunately, in his sermon on the great feast day, he made some allusions to Henry and Guibert the antipope. These were extremely displeasing to the people, and angry mutterings began to be heard. At the conclusion of the homily, before the mass was completed, the mutterings changed to furious cries. 'Death to the false prophet!' 'Death to the traitor! Down with the King's enemies!' And women's voices, mingling in the tumult, cried out: 'If we let him escape alive, we shall lose the friendship of the King. Death to him rather than this should happen!'— in a moment swords were drawn, pikes were brandished, and a wild rush was made towards the altar.

The assistant priests fled in terror, and Bernard alone

[1] See Affò, vol. ii. pp. 40-43, 55 *et seq.*, where he denies that Boniface ever had rule over the city, and 124 *et seq.*, with reference to Matilda.

with the abbot Tedaldo[1] remained to face the angry crowd. As they rushed at the high altar, Tedaldo stepped impulsively in front of the cardinal, to shield him from a blow aimed at his neck by one of the foremost in the mob, and received it in his stead, paying no attention to the blood which began to flow, and calmly keeping his place. Then Bernard with a smile on his face took a step forward. The quiet demeanour of these two heroic men incited the people to still greater fury, and pointing to the cardinal they shrieked out: 'He has a smile of the devil who possesses him! Let us seize and drag him forth!' And this they did forthwith, showering blows and curses upon his head, and thrusting him into a dungeon. The scene within the church was of the wildest confusion; the sacred vessels were overturned, broken, and carried off, the rich gifts and vestments presented by Matilda and the cardinal were made away with, and the church itself reduced to a ruin.

Matilda was staying in the Modenese country when news of this outbreak reached her. She was moved to tears at the thought of Bernard's sufferings and the sacrilege committed, but was greatly incensed at the conduct of the Parmesans. In three days she collected a force and marched to Parma, prepared to punish its citizens with the utmost rigour. For she, who was so merciful to the injured, and generous to the needy, was yet a severe judge when it came to dealing with rebellion and outrage.

But the attitude of the Parmesans suffered a sudden change; whether the ill-feeling they had exhibited was only like the outburst of a child whose fury was soon spent, or whether they were cowed at the prospect of meeting Matilda's wrath, we do not know. Certain it is that on her approach they despatched an embassy to

[1] Abbot of Brescello according to Affò, vol. ii. p. 128.

meet her at the gates, expressing sorrow and contrition for what had happened. Upon Bernard's liberation, he too pleaded for his persecutors with such fervour that Matilda's wrath was assuaged, and she granted a full pardon to the offenders, only stipulating that the wrecked church should be thoroughly restored and put in order, and all the sacred vessels returned.

Bernard's calm demeanour at the time of the tumult in the church, the heroism he displayed in prison, together with this act of intercession for his enemies, so won their hearts that an entire revulsion of feeling ensued in his favour. So completely had the temper of the people changed, that when in 1106 it was arranged that the Pope should visit the city to dedicate the new cathedral, then in process of construction, they begged that Cardinal Bernard might be ordained their bishop, which was done, amidst general rejoicings. Great festivities took place, at which both Bernard and Matilda were welcomed with effusion by the erstwhile schismatics, and we hear of no further rebellions.

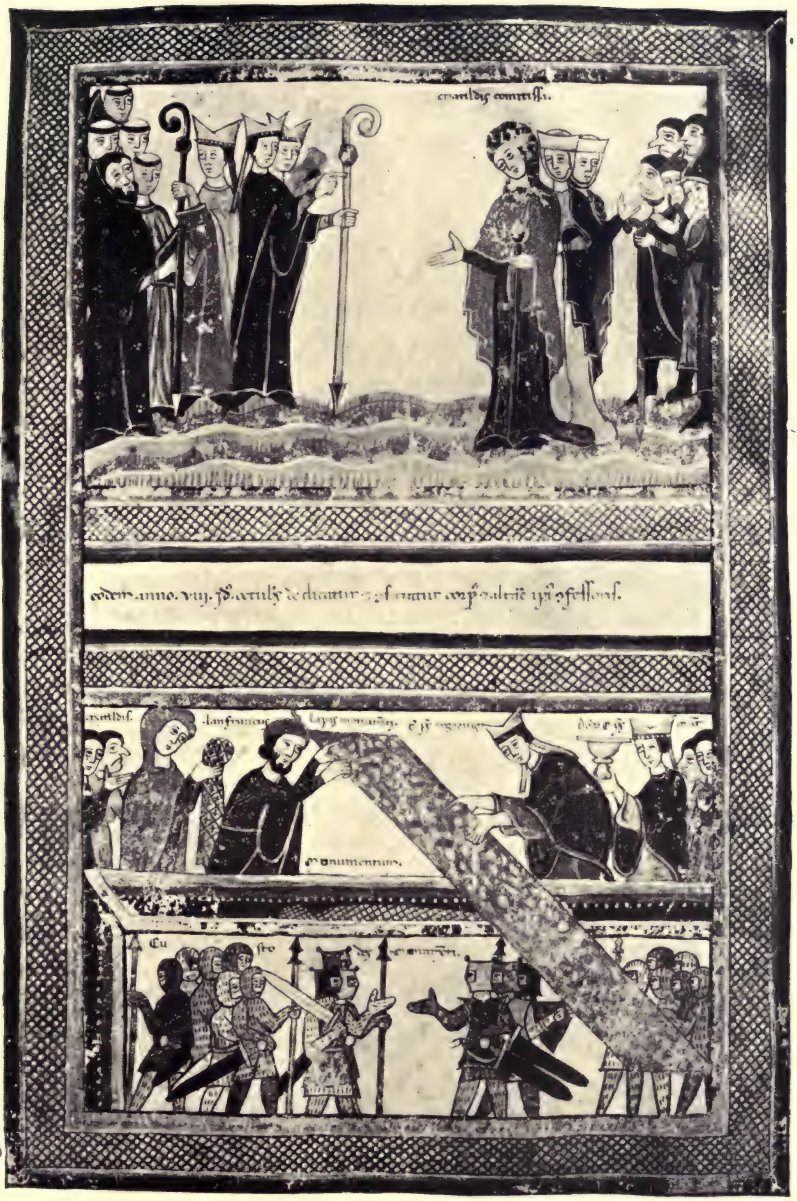
Two interesting ceremonies honoured by Matilda's presence took place in that same year of 1106—those connected with the translation of the body of San Gemignano, the patron saint of Modena. The month of April was first fixed by the bishop and the canons of Modena, for the transfer of the saint's remains from their primitive resting-place in the ancient church, to a beautiful new sarcophagus designed by the architect of the cathedral, Lanfranc Romengardi. This was to be deposited in the crypt beneath the altar dedicated to the saint, in the place where it now stands. Immense crowds flocked to Modena to be present at the festival, and the city was unable to give hospitality to all. Multitudes camped outside the walls, and preachers were sent to

them, exhorting them to confess their sins and repent, in honour of San Gemignano.

When on the actual day for the translation of the saint's body, the crowd pressed closely on all sides to view the procession and the consecration of the new altar, a dispute arose between the citizens and the assembled bishops. The clergy wished to have the old coffin opened so that the saint's body might be exposed to view and the faithful might venerate it. The Modenese citizens objected, out of superstitious dread that the remains might be violated by too zealous worshippers who wished for relics. So strong was the feeling against interfering with the saint's remains, that the bishop decided to take counsel with Matilda. She, with great perspicacity, advised them to wait until the autumn, when Pope Paschal would be in Modena for the dedication of the new cathedral. It would be better to wait, she said, for his decision, and every one would be quite content to abide by his judgment in the matter.

So the tumult was quieted, and upon the arrival of the Pope at the beginning of October, after a council had been called to deliberate upon the question, it was agreed that six nobles and twelve of the citizens should take an oath as sureties for the rest of the people, that when exposed to view, the holy relics of the saint should remain inviolate. Then in solemn procession, cardinals, bishops, priests, and clergy proceeded to the tomb, and Bono, Bishop of Reggio, assisted by Lanfranc, uncovered the wooden coffin, and the body of the saint was found fair and intact as on the day of death. From it there emanated a sweet perfume,[1] says the tradition, as is

[1] 'O quanta exultatio, quantusque suavitatis odor!
Quanta fragrantia inde emanavit.'
See Translatio Corporis S. Geminiani; Muratori, *Rer. It. Script.*, vol. vi.



MATILDA AT MODENA

FROM A MS. IN THE CHAPTER ARCHIVES

often the case after the spirit of a saint has left its mortal husk, from which has arisen the saying of the 'odour of sanctity.'

Cries of joy and gratitude rent the air when the news spread beyond the narrow limits of the immediate spectators. Owing to the thousands of people who wished to visit the remains and venerate the saint, it was found impossible to complete the consecration of the altar on that same day, and the ceremony had to be postponed until the following morning. Watch was kept at the tomb, prayers were chanted the whole night through, and gifts were poured forth by the pilgrims. Rich and poor brought what they could. Dodo the bishop presented a chalice and patten of silver, richly wrought, and amongst other oblations Matilda brought with her a magnificent pall or mantle of cloth of gold, to enshroud the saint's body before it was once more hidden from view. The translation of the body of San Gemignano is the subject of a very interesting MS. written to commemorate the event, and still preserved in the chapter archives at Modena. Amongst several miniatures illustrating the ceremony there are two in which Matilda appears: one where the bishop and his clergy are welcoming her arrival in Modena; and the other where she is seen holding the pall, and at the same time Lanfranc the architect, and his assistants, are in the act of closing the sarcophagus, in which the body of the saint is visible, already wrapped in his mantle of cloth of gold! These, like the miniatures of the Vatican codex of Domnizo, can in nowise be regarded as portraits, since the rude art of that day could not reach so far; but they are interesting insomuch as they are the work of Matilda's own time—painted while she was yet alive.

CHAPTER XX

Henry's last years, and the conspiracies of his son against his sovereignty—His piteous letter to the King of France—His death in 1106 at Liège—Council of Guastalla—Pope Paschal's reception in France of the envoys of Henry V., and his message to the young King—Matilda's last visit to Rome—Her reception of the petition of the inhabitants of Massa Finalese—Struggles between the cities and the growth of their power—Matilda's attitude of neutrality in 1110, when Henry V. visits Italy—Henry's arrival in Rome and abduction of the Pope—He frees Matilda's two vassal bishops on the arrival of her envoy, Arduino della Palude—Matilda receives Henry V. at Bianello and entertains him for three days.

THE last few years of Henry IV.'s life were miserable in the extreme. It would seem as if some of the maledictions called down on him by Gregory VII. had taken effect, as if even in this world he had reaped the due reward for his deeds.

No personal love or esteem towards their sovereign had ever prevented the German princes from changing parties in their own interests; on the contrary, they repaid the King in the measure he had meted out to them, for they realised how he had used them for his own ends, admitting them to his favour when he needed their support, and casting them off and betraying them when his position was reassured. The best amongst his subjects were suspicious of him, and, moreover, would not tender him undivided allegiance, since he had remained unreconciled with the Pope, and conspiracy succeeded

conspiracy. The Emperor was growing old, prematurely old, his alertness and vigour were deserting him, and now to this unworthy ruler came the bitterest blow that any man can receive; he, the betrayer, was betrayed by his own flesh and blood. The son upon whom he had lavished all his affection joined the ranks of his enemies, and compassed his downfall. The discontented princes aided and abetted him, working on an over-ambitious nature, so that this unprincipled son never rested until he had driven his father forth, a broken-hearted old man, to die in misery alone.

Whatever his faults may have been, his end is worthy of pity, and no one can read unmoved this aged Emperor's appeal to Philip of France, in which he sets forth the indignities and wrongs he has suffered at the hands of his dearly-loved son :—[1]

'Most illustrious prince,' he writes, 'and most faithful amongst those in whom (after God) we hope, I have chosen you as the first before whom I think it necessary to deplore my misfortunes, and before whom I should approach on my knees, if in so doing I can still safeguard the majesty of empire; above all, because we find it odious and intolerable, not only for you but for all Christian men, that the Apostolic See, from whence came up, till our days, only the salutary fruits of consolation and sweetness, and the salvation of souls, should now hurl forth all manner of vengeance, anathema, and perdition. . . .

'That which I can hardly say without great affliction of heart and many tears, and which I shudder to hear said, is that my son, my dear Absalom, they have armed against me, and have inspired with such fury, that in defiance of the faith, and the oath he swore to me as a

[1] From Villemain, vol. ii. p. 390 *et seq.*

vassal to his lord, he has invaded my kingdom, deposed my bishops and clergy, upheld my enemies and persecutors, and at length, of the which I would be silent if I could, which I would not have any one believe, spurning all natural affection, he conspired against my life and my soul, and had no scruples in employing force and deceit to gain his ends, increasing thereby his peril and his shame.

'In the midst of these criminal machinations, as I was peacefully abiding in some sort of security, towards the season of the holy Advent of our Lord, he invited me to a conference at the place called Coblentz, where I remained quietly enough; he invited me as a son might, who wishes to take counsel with his father upon a matter of their common honour and safety. When I saw him, suddenly touched by paternal affection, by the most extreme sorrow, I fell at his feet, imploring him for his soul's salvation not to stain his honour by such conduct towards me, however much I deserved to suffer for my sins, because there is no divine law that commands a son to punish the faults of a father. But he, too well, or rather too miserably, instructed in the art of deceiving, began to decry so abominable a crime, and falling himself at my feet, he asked my pardon for the past; he promised that in future he would obey me in all things with fidelity and truth, as a loyal vassal his liege lord, as a son his father, if only I would reconcile myself with the Holy Apostolic See. And as I eagerly consented, only saying that I would submit the matter to a diet of the princes, and adding that he had only to conduct me to Mainz during the present feast of Christmas and conclude there the compact of my reconciliation in the most loyal and honourable manner that he could, and then to take me

from there in peace and security. This he promised in the name of that truth by which God has commanded that a son shall honour his father, a father love his son.

'Upon this agreement, which even a heathen would have respected, I departed tranquilly, my son having preceded me a short while before. Now, however, there came into my presence several of my faithful followers to announce all too truly that I had been betrayed and deceived by false guarantees of peace and affection.

'My son, recalled by me, renewed his oath with fervour, and swore a second time that he would pledge his life for mine. As I had then arrived at the place called Bingen the Friday before Christmas, the number of men-at-arms began to increase, and the plot began to reveal itself before my eyes. My son came to me and said: "Father, we must retire to a neighbouring castle, because the Bishop of Mainz will not receive us in the town so long as you remain under the ban of the Holy See, and so long as you are not admitted to the peace of the Church, and are unreconciled, I dare not cast you into the midst of your enemies. Pass the festival of Christmas here in honour and in peace, keep with you whomsoever it may please you. In the meantime I will work for both of us as hard and faithfully as I can, for I believe your cause to be mine also." "And I, my son," I replied. "May God to-day be witness and judge between us! He knows how I made a man of you and my heir; at the price of what tribulation I have laboured to serve you; what enmity I have caused and suffered in consequence, you alone know." But nevertheless, in face of this appeal to his faith and his oaths, for the third time he promised me that, should any sudden peril arise, he would offer his life for mine.

'After he had imprisoned me in this castle, events showed in what spirit and with what kind of heart he had spoken. I was shut up there with three of my followers, and no one else was admitted. My most implacable enemies were given me as keepers. May God be blessed in all things, the one Almighty King to exalt and abase whom He will!

'Whilst on the most holy day of Christmas, the Holy of Holies, the Divine Child was born for the redemption of every soul, for me alone He was not born. For, not to speak of the injuries, the menaces, the affronts, the sword levied at my head, and the hunger and thirst I suffered at the hands of men, whom it was an injury for me to see and to hear, to say nothing of other things still more cruel, seeing that I had once enjoyed some measure of happiness, this is a thing I can never forget, this is a complaint that I shall never cease to make to every Christian soul—during those most holy days, there in my prison, I was deprived of all Christian communion.

'During this time of penance and tribulation there came to me from my son a prince called Wibert, to tell me there would be no guarantee for my life, if I did not at once, and without resistance, give up the insignia of royalty, according to the resolution and order of the princes. And I who, even if the whole earth should become my kingdom, would not sacrifice my life for it, understanding that whether I would or no, I must do what was demanded, sent to Mainz the crown, the sceptre, the sword, and the lance.

'Then my son, having concerted with my enemies, came from Mainz, where he had left my friends, as if he were going to conduct me there, but having had me brought under a strong bodyguard to the place called

Ingelheim, he ordered me into his presence. There I found assembled a great number of my enemies, and my son was no better to me than they. And as if they thought they would make it more secure and lasting if they forced me to despoil myself of the kingdom and the appurtenances thereof with my own hands, they outraged me with threats, saying that if I did not do as was required of me, my life would not be safe. "Then," I said, "if it concerns my life, the thing which is most precious to me, since I need it to repent before God, I will do whatever you wish." And when I asked if then at least I should be assured of my life, the legate of the Apostolic See who was present (I do not say he had heard all) said that I could in no ways save myself from death, if I did not confess in public that I had unjustly persecuted Hildebrand, and had unjustly substituted Guibert for him, and that up till this very hour I had maintained an unjust persecution against the Apostolic See, and against the Church.

'Then quite overcome, with great contrition of heart, I began to entreat, in the name of God and of conscience, that a day and a place might be granted me to justify myself in the presence of all the princes, and if they found me guilty in any way, to seek, according to the advice of the wisest, a way of penitence and satisfaction as they should command, and to give whatever number of hostages the princes should require from amongst our vassals. But the same legate refused me day and place, saying that the matter must be settled then and there, or no means for escape would be given me.

'In this tribulation, having asked if, in case I confessed all they commanded, I should obtain by my confession indulgence and absolution, the legate declared he had

not the power to absolve me, and added that if I wished to be absolved, I must go to Rome and give satisfaction to the Holy See.

'Thus isolated and bereft (for with the same violence and the same artifices they had despoiled me of my fortresses, my patrimonial domains, and all that I had acquired in the kingdom), they left me in that house. Having remained there some time, and my son having sent to tell me with the same spirit of perfidy that I might expect him, there came a deputation of my faithful followers to warn me that if I remained there according to my son's injunctions, I should either be thrown into a dungeon for the rest of my life, or else be decapitated on the spot.

'At this news, in fear of my life, I took flight immediately and came to Cologne, thence after a few days I travelled to Liège. In both these places I have always found faithful men, unswerving in their loyalty to the kingdom. According to their advice and that of my other vassals, I thought it safer and more honourable to address myself to you to deplore my misfortunes; safer on account of the natural advantage of relationship and ancient friendship; more honourable because of the glorious name of so great a kingdom.

'I beg you, therefore, in the name of faith and friendship, to succour in my tribulation and injuries a neighbour and a friend. Even if these bonds of faith and friendship did not exist between us, it would behove you and all kings of the earth to avenge our injuries and our abasement, and to extirpate from the face of the earth as an example such criminal and outrageous tyranny.'

Although even after these pitiable humiliations and

insults the Emperor made an effort to reassert himself, and collected an army of his faithful adherents and their vassals, it was of little avail. He was exhausted with grief and indignation at his son's conduct, and after a few days' illness expired at Liège (August 6, 1106), still under the ban of the Church, it is true, but reconciled in his heart with God and man. He had expressed the deepest contrition for his sins, and had received the sacrament. He sent messages of peace to the Pope and to his son. In Liège and in Cologne he was sincerely mourned by the populace, and although his friends prevailed upon the Bishop of Liège to grant him burial, so great was the fear of excommunication that his remains were exhumed and placed in an unconsecrated chapel outside the town. Five years later his ungrateful son had at least the grace, when making terms with the Pope, to insist that his father should be given Christian burial, and eventually the remains of Henry IV. rested in the cathedral at Spires, according to his dying wish.

The man who had occupied so prominent a place in the history of Europe for half a century had played in many respects a most unworthy rôle. He had stooped to base means to gain his ends, he had chosen ignoble friends, and again and again had proved himself a traitor to his word. He had no great plans of empire, or any high ideals. Unendowed with foresight, he yet possessed a certain gift of intuition, which enabled him for the moment to use the right man in the right place, and to extricate himself, after well-nigh entire defeat, from situations that many cleverer and wiser men would have deemed hopeless. His one simple plan was to weaken his adversaries by fostering divisions amongst

them, to set prince against prince, burghers against princes, laity against clergy, schismatics against Pope; his only steady purpose was the maintenance of what he considered his rights as sovereign ruler. He was popular with the townsfolk and lower orders, for he conceded many privileges to the towns, which tended to promote their freedom and development.

The Empire had suffered during his long minority, and he strove in vain to recover the position held by his father; but he was not the man his father had been, and times were changed. Be it always remembered that his quarrel with Rome was a political rather than a religious one; he had no wish to remain outside the pale of the Church—at the last he was most eager to be reconciled with her, and he had never been the enemy of religion as he understood it. But he was neither strong enough nor astute enough to grasp the significance of the spiritual forces at work, the forces which dominated the men of his day. He fought only for what he believed would otherwise have vanished—the supreme power of the Empire, and his own right to uphold it. His faults were many; yet his upbringing makes them comprehensible, and in a measure, the persecutions and miseries of his last years atoned for them.

In Italy itself all writers emphasise the feeling of relief manifested at the news of Henry's death, and perhaps in their zeal for the Papal cause they overstate the circumstances. We are told, for instance, that Matilda heard with sorrow that her cousin had died impenitent and without ghostly consolation, but she could not refrain from 'giving thanks to God who had at last given peace to the Church'; and many others

mention Matilda's sorrow and relief of mind.[1] Some indeed point out, quoting from the Uspergense Chronicle, that there remained not one soul on earth to mourn the dead Emperor, and that on the contrary the news of his death was received with shouts of joy, 'as of an unexpected victory.'

Paschal, as we have already seen, had determined to leave Rome and visit the north of Italy, and he decided it would be well to hold a council in the north, to inquire into civil and ecclesiastical matters, and to enforce the observance of many canonical laws. It was then agreed that the council should assemble at Matilda's castle of Guastalla in October, and that the Pope should there receive the envoys of the new King, and possibly visit Germany later. This council took place immediately after the consecration of the altar of San Gemignano at Modena, and Henry's ambassadors assured the Pope of their master's wish to submit himself in all things to the Church, and begged that His Holiness would confirm his election to the German throne. Paschal sent the envoys back with cordial assurances of his willingness, and felt hopeful that the young King would fulfil his promises.

When, however, after visiting Parma and consecrating Bernard as its bishop, he arrived in Verona on his way to Germany, he found that matters were by no means so reassuring as he had hoped; that Henry, feeling more secure in his own position among his subjects, was not so likely to yield to the Pope's wishes; and that the ques-

[1] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 295; Ved., vol. ii.

Muratori writes: 'He ended his days on the 7th of August 1106 to appear before the tribunal of God and render account of all his vices, of the continuous vexations he had given the Church, of so much Christian blood shed by his caprices, and of his obstinate support of the schism.'—*Annali*, vol. vi., *sub anno*.

tion of investitures might still prove a stumbling-block in the path of perfect accord between Pope and Emperor. He turned aside, therefore, and made his way to France, to call upon King Philip for help. There he received another embassy from the German court, at whose head, curiously enough, was Matilda's erstwhile husband, Guelf of Bavaria. The German envoys gave the Pope to understand in very clear terms that their King had no longer the intention of yielding to His Holiness with regard to the investitures. The Pope sent them back with the following message: 'The Church which had been redeemed and freed from slavery by the blood of Christ could not again become a slave: and it would be a return to slavery if she could not elect her bishops without the help and counsel of others, and if these bishops had to place their hands, consecrated by the body and blood of the Lord, in those of the laity, stained with blood, and receive from them the symbol of their dignity.'[1]

Fearing that after hearing this plain statement of the case Henry would suddenly descend into Italy, Paschal hastened back. He was met in Tuscany by Matilda, and accompanied by her to Rome. This was the last visit Matilda ever paid to the great city for which she had done so much. The rest of her years were spent in her own dominions, working unceasingly for the good of her subjects, considering always how she, their mistress, could best serve them.

Tiraboschi, in his history of the abbey of Nonantula,[2] gives us an anecdote of these times. He says that in the year 1107 certain men of Massa Finalese, a small town to the north of Modena, supported by the Bishop

[1] Tosti, lib. VI. p. 338.

[2] *Storia dell' augusta Badia di S. Silvestro di Nonantula*, vol. i. p. 107.

of Modena, Dodo, came to Matilda to plead that they might be relieved from the burden of 'albergaria,' that is to say, of having the Countess's servants and men-at-arms quartered upon them. They also said that they were prepared to swear upon the bones of the saints that neither in the time of the great Boniface, nor in the days of the Countess Beatrice had they been made to suffer this grievance. Tiraboschi goes on to tell us that Matilda was then staying at her favourite abbey of S. Benedetto Polirone, when the deputation came to see her, but as it was then the season of Lent it was impossible for her to receive their oath! After Easter, however, she gave them a most gracious hearing, and 'to the honour of God and San Gemignano' dispensed them from taking the oath, and granted to Massa the freedom it desired.

Mention is frequently made at this time of the 'wars' between Pisa and Lucca, and the disagreements which often led to blows between the inhabitants of Prato and Florence—a further evidence of the growth of individuality amongst the cities, and the keen rivalry and jealousy they evinced towards each other, since in the old days of feudal dominion no town would have dared to fight against its neighbour, unless called upon to do so by its liege lord. Matilda seems to have taken some measures to put down these petty quarrels,[1] but her arm was evidently not so mighty as of yore, nor was her power so far-reaching. The cities were outgrowing their infancy and becoming too strong for her; the very charters and concessions she had granted them became, as it were, weapons against herself, and she was no longer able to levy armies from their midst as in earlier days. This and her failing health are the only

[1] Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 29.

reasons we can assign for her strangely neutral attitude in 1110, when once more Italy was threatened with a German invasion, and once more a German king appeared at the head of his army upon the road to Rome.

Some months previously Henry had sent his ambassadors to the Pope to ask for the imperial crown, and Paschal had no choice but to say that he would receive him, and consecrate him as Emperor, always supposing the question of the investitures was conceded to the Church. To Paschal's propositions the Emperor-elect apparently agreed, and at any rate he made up his mind that he should be crowned and consecrated Emperor in Rome, as so many of his forefathers had been. Fiorentini [1] tells us that Matilda, when the news of Henry's approaching descent into Italy reached her, proceeded to furnish all her strong places with men and provisions, and to hold them in readiness for defence. But as far as the towns were concerned it is evident, as we have said, that her power was not what it once had been.

The Emperor-elect arrived in Italy in the autumn with a splendid army of thirty thousand men, gathered from every province of his kingdom, commanded by princes, dukes, and bishops. He also bore in his train a company of men of law, and numerous writers, the former to assert his rights by means of their learning, and the latter to glorify his deeds with their pen! It was evident, in spite of his protestations to the Pope, that he came in no pacific spirit, for those towns which would not yield him tribute, or do him homage, paid heavily for their temerity. Nogara was reduced to ashes for daring to resist him, and many castles and fortresses on his route met with the same fate. Milan alone refused

[1] Lib. II. p. 303.

to open her gates and remained unharmed—perhaps the German king was in too great a hurry to reach Rome to waste time in subduing her by the force of a long drawn-out siege. At any rate he passed on his way, and encamped for some time at Roncaglia, in the neighbourhood of Piacenza. From thence he sent his envoys to Matilda to try and discover her attitude. Matilda, however, remained warily inert, and maintained a position of neutrality. 'She took the oath of vassalage as far as it concerned the enemies of the Empire, with the exception of the Pope,' says Gregorovius,[1] while Italian historians tell us that she entered into a treaty with Henry, and they exchanged messages of concord and of peace. Not only the King's envoys, but numbers of Henry's barons visited this great lady at her fortress castle of Bianello, where she was then abiding. They came full of curiosity to see the woman who was reckoned 'the marvel of her age,' and went away greatly impressed with her majesty, her learning and culture.

Henry pursued his way to Rome, leaving behind him desolate cities and smoking embers, to bear witness to the ferocity he had displayed in subduing them. When he finally reached Rome, and the ceremony of the coronation was to take place, his attitude towards the Pope displayed a like hostility. Very confused and conflicting accounts as to what actually occurred have reached us. It would seem that Paschal in a pacific spirit had compromised by offering to give over to the Emperor much of the temporal power hitherto owned by the Church. To this the cardinals and bishops demurred; the Emperor grew furious, and refused to yield in the matter of the investitures, and a tumult ensued within St. Peter's itself. Henry, who

[1] Gregorovius, vol. iv. pt. II. p. 330.

had previously ordered the church to be surrounded by his men, carried off Paschal prisoner, together with many cardinals and bishops, and retired into the Sabine country, leaving Rome in a state of anarchy, for the Romans rose and slew every Teuton upon whom they could lay hands.

Amongst the prisoners Henry had made were Bernard, Bishop of Parma, and Bonsignore of Reggio, both of them Matilda's vassals. Directly the news reached her of what had occurred, she despatched her faithful general, Arduino della Palude, to bid the Emperor remember his pact with her and set her subjects free. Arduino della Palude fulfilled his mistress's commands to such good purpose that the two bishops were immediately liberated. It would certainly seem, therefore, that Matilda must have entered into some sort of an alliance with the German king rather as an equal than as a vassal, as Gregorovius implies. The Pope himself and six of the cardinals were still held in durance at the castle of Tribuccio, and the other cardinals and bishops were imprisoned in another castle for nearly two months.[1] It was only under compulsion, and in order to save Rome from being put to the sword, and all its ecclesiastical dignitaries from further outrage,[2] that Paschal yielded thus far in the much-vexed question—that the Emperor was to invest the bishops and abbots with ring and staff, provided always they were fitting men, and had been elected fairly, without simoniacal influence. Upon the strength of this compact Pope and Emperor returned to Rome, and Henry was crowned at St. Peter's, but with less ceremonial than was customary—in fact, the gates of Rome were closed for fear of disturbances, since the

[1] See notes to Domnizo by Don Davoli, who here quotes Pandolf Pisano as his authority, p. 400.

[2] See Don Tosti, lib. VI. p. 552.

Romans were still indignant with both sides for the part they had played—the Emperor for employing force of arms to gain his point, and the Pope for yielding.

On the way back to Germany, in passing through Matilda's territories, the Emperor sent ambassadors ahead to find out whether she would receive him. Domnizo says his curiosity was very great, and that he could not leave Italy without seeing with his own eyes the famous Countess, for so many years the most determined adversary of his house. And Matilda consented to entertain the son of her old enemy.[1]

No stronger evidence is wanting to show how changed were the times. Matilda, advanced in years, worn with her long life of activity, must have lost at the same time much of her mental vigour as well as her former warlike spirit, to be willing to receive the Emperor who had humiliated the Pope, and forced him to yield over that very matter which had set the whole of Italy at variance for many generations. Perhaps for the time being the young Emperor was able to agree with his aged kinswoman to waive political considerations, and to remember only their kinship.

Domnizo[2] tells us how Henry abode with Matilda at Bianello for three days, and paid all honour and reverence to that wonderful woman, calling her his mother, and nominating her his Vice Regina in Liguria, 'swearing that in the whole earth there could not be found a Princess her equal.'[3] Many historians hint, however, that Henry's visit was not due to disinterested curiosity, but was undertaken in order to remind Matilda of the bond of relationship between them, with a view to inheriting some of her lands.

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. xviii. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.* See also Fiorentini, lib. II. p. 311.

CHAPTER XXI

Matilda at the baths of Pisa in 1112—Her failing health and much suffering—She still insists on keeping all the fasts and vigils of the Church—Her frequent visits to San Benedetto Polirone—Alarming illness at Monte Baranzone in 1114—Revolt of Mantua—Matilda recovers and resolves to punish Mantua—Raises troops and descends to Bondeno, where a rendezvous is given—Council of the citizens of Mantua—Resolve to throw themselves upon Matilda's mercy—She refuses at first to pardon them—But yields finally at the instance of the Bishop and other members of the court.

THE few remaining years of Matilda's life were passed in Tuscany and Lombardy, and occupied still in thinking of her people, and making provision for their welfare. In 1112 she visited the celebrated baths near Pisa, Acqua, where, as Fiorentini, Erra, and Mellini tell us, an inscription was inserted in a wall near the baths commemorating the fact that she had restored them :—

MATHELDIS
Comitissa insignis
Ob Humanam Valetudinem
Instaurandam, Praeservandamque
Amena Haec ab Aquis salubria
Balnea
In omnigentium Hominum Vsum
Omni cum ornatu cultuque
Dicavit A
A.D. MCXII. K. Maias.

MATILDA

The famous Countess
Dedicated these baths
(pleasant and healing in their waters)
To the use of all races of men
with all their adornments and appliances
For the preservation and
restoration of human health.

Perhaps she had proved these healing waters herself, and for the time her sufferings had been relieved. For she suffered greatly during these last years. The long active life she had led, full of hardships for a woman, and the religious fasts which she rigorously observed, had sapped her strength, and she was now reduced to a wreck of her former self. Even now, however, weak as she was, she kept all the fasts and vigils that the Church enjoins, and would rise at night with the monks to attend the services in the chapel of whatever monastery she might be visiting.

The greater part of each year was now spent at S. Benedetto, the great Benedictine monastery some fifteen miles from Mantua, founded by her grandfather Tedaldo, enriched and enlarged by her father, ofttimes visited by her in her childish days; dear to her, therefore, in the past, and doubly dear now, for the peace which brooded over it, undisturbed by memories of war and strife such as Canossa had witnessed. Many are the privileges she granted to S. Benedetto, and many a fertile court or territory was bestowed by her on the monks. Finally, she decided to bequeath her vast collection of manuscripts to this favoured abbey. We can picture her on the days when she was feeling fairly well, seated in the shady cloister of San Simeone,[1] turning over the leaves of some

[1] At San Benedetto there are three cloisters; that dedicated to San Simeone (a hermit from Armenia who first erected a small oratory there at the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century) is said to be the most ancient.

precious parchment, watching the skilful monks at their work of copying and illuminating manuscripts; and then receiving visits from her faithful captains and retainers, who would bring reports from the surrounding country. Every now and then there would be long talks with Abbot Alberico himself—about the books or about the latest news from Cluny, the mother abbey.

When the heat of summer was at its greatest, and the air of the plains grew so oppressive that it seemed to sap the little strength that was left to her, the doctors advised a move to Monte Baranzone, far to the south-east of Canossa, in the Modenese mountains above Sassuolo.[1] Very slowly, we may be sure, the journey was made, and a long rest at Canossa was necessary before the ruder journey up into the mountains could be undertaken.

In the summer of 1114, while at Monte Baranzone, she grew so alarmingly ill that her life was despaired of, and the news spread fast that she had indeed passed away. This report gained such credence in Mantua that the citizens saw fit to rise in rebellion against the governor placed there by Matilda, and they then assaulted her castle of Ripalta, a short distance from the city itself. Manfred, Bishop of Mantua, a devoted friend of Matilda, was visiting her at the time of this outbreak, and it is very probable that it was he who received the first news of what was occurring there.

All Matilda's faithful court, thinking such news could only distress their dear mistress and aggravate her malady, agreed to keep it a secret, and forbade any one to speak

[1] Even during these last years, however, there are evidences of her attendances at the courts of law. Savioli (vol. i. p. 151) quotes one in 1113 at Baviana in the Ferrarese country, and there is a document dated 1114 at Carpineta, where, in presence of Countess Matilda, judgment is pronounced on two contending parties. *Ant. It.*, vol. ii. p. 975.

CLOISTER OF S. SIMEON AT S. BENEDETTO POLIRONE

of it to her. But it was thought well that the bishop should return at once to his diocese and see if he could not reduce the Mantuans to a sense of the impropriety of their conduct, and assure them at the same time that their liege lady still lived, and that they were incurring great danger by their rebellious acts. Fortunately, for the moment Matilda's strength seemed to rally, and the bishop, making the excuse that his presence was now necessary within his diocese, hastened back to Mantua. But by this time the Mantuans had roused themselves to such a pitch of excitement that they refused to believe the bishop, who narrowly escaped being torn in pieces by an infuriated mob. The tumult grew ever more violent, and at length the most belligerent rushed out of the city and on to Ripalta, which they destroyed with fire and sword, bombarding the walls and battering down the towers, bearing back to Mantua huge fragments of the masonry as trophies.

For nearly a month this news was kept from Matilda, but early in August she was so much better that her attendants deemed it wise to tell her what was happening in Mantua. Then it seemed as if the old war spirit had returned to that worn-out, exhausted body, and the news of the affront to her authority served as a stimulus to rouse her to fresh deeds of valour, as in the far-off days of her youth. Matilda had dearly loved Mantua for all the family associations it held, and in the past she had more than once treated its citizens with clemency.

This outbreak, however, was one more violent than the rest, and her anger was greatly kindled. The Mantuans had treated her with little respect for a long time past. They had overrun her territories, and prevented the peasants from cultivating her lands in the neighbourhood

of the river Mincio. They had wantonly fired the crops, and deprived the poor people of the fruits of their labours, and to such a state of terror were the peasants reduced, that they preferred to leave the land untilled, rather than run the risk of fleeing again and again before the dreaded Mantuans. Even the navigation of the Po was rendered impracticable by those lawless people, for they descended to that river in armed boats by way of the Mincio and committed acts of shameless piracy. They cruelly fell upon the Countess's subjects whenever and wherever they met them, the roads were rendered as unsafe as the river, and the whole country-side terrorised to such an extent that, in passing through the district at this time, one would have imagined a German king had visited it with sword and desolation.

Therefore, as we have said, Matilda roused herself with almost her old energy. 'The time has come at length when Mantua must perish,' she exclaimed. 'This iniquitous city shall pay the price of the cruel affronts it has offered me.'[1] She commanded that a levy of soldiers should be made all over her dominions, and that the vessels lying at anchor on the Po should arm themselves at once. She sent envoys to the republic of Venice and other allies asking them for help, and made every preparation for the speedy annihilation of Mantua. Descending herself to Bondeno, she expressed a determination to command her troops in person, although her warrior knights and captains remonstrated with her as much as they dared, fearing that her strength would not be equal to the feat, in spite of this wonderful resurrection.

In the meantime Mantua had heard what was tran-

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. xix.

spiring at Bondeno and along the waters of the Po, and dissensions arose amongst the inhabitants. The most truculent were for holding out and fighting the Countess, the most timid wished to flee from the city at once. A third party, composed of the older and more sober-minded citizens, were for yielding. At a council called together hastily, while the matter was being fully discussed, the last-named division strongly advanced its views, in opposition to the wishes of hot-headed youth.

'It may seem good to you, O young men!' began their spokesman, 'to live on robberies and plunder, but for ourselves, we should feel ashamed to suffer such a siege! The foreign soldiers will lop our vines and destroy their crops, therefore, O valiant youths! let us abandon strife! Let a party of us go and demand pardon of our liege lady, since it behoves us to show ourselves absolutely faithful to Matilda.'

The thought of losing the entire fruit of the vintage appears to have carried great weight with the younger members of this council, and they agreed therefore to send a deputation to Matilda. Their sovereign lady did not willingly consent to see them, and when they were finally admitted into her presence at the castle of Bondeno, she received them standing and turned away her head from them, keeping her eyes fixed on the ground, not deigning to give them one glance, whilst they pleaded for pardon. In spite of this freezing reception, the principal envoy spoke long in favour of his fellow-citizens. He besought the Countess to pardon them, urging in their defence that it was no hatred of her that had moved them to rebellion—on the contrary they had always loved her; but it was love of liberty—a love which is only

inspired in noble and generous hearts. She must know well that hitherto they had never given any signs of withdrawing themselves from their allegiance to her, and that the defunct Emperor had in consequence burdened them with a siege of many months, and that they had valorously resisted him to the last miserable extremity. Freed once from his yoke, they confessed that they had wished to guard the liberty they had tasted, but they had not wished to pass beyond the limits of what had been granted them, until the news reached them of her supposed death. They acknowledged that they had been guilty of too easy credulity in this matter, and they had unworthily exalted the idea of liberty—however beautiful and desirable it might be—above the allegiance they owed to the great Countess. Also, against their fidelity, they had sacked and destroyed Ripalta, and in short they had in many ways most justly incurred her indignation. Nevertheless they implored her pardon—the pardon of her who had rendered herself immortal, not only by her feats of arms, but by reason of her piety—pardon for that people who might be said to have been the most favoured by the continual presence of Boniface and Beatrice, her father and mother. They humbly asked her therefore to spare them all the miseries and horrors of war.[1]

The speaker's zeal seems to have outrun his love of truth when he stated that the Mantuans had always loved their liege lady, and his pleadings apparently had no effect on Matilda, for she let the embassy depart without giving any signs that she would relent. The Mantuan envoys, however, did not yet despair of the ultimate success of their mission, and when dismissed

[1] Bacchini, p. 220.

from her presence they sought audiences with the chief among her captains and the various ecclesiastics then at Bondeno, imploring their intercession. Without doubt Manfred was amongst the number, and pleaded for his unhappy city. Little by little Matilda's heart was softened, and she consented at length to give the ambassadors another hearing. Then she made her terms. First reproving them for their ignoble conduct, she desired that the city should forthwith open its gates to her, that the citizens should renew their oath of fidelity, and that they should pay her the customary tribute money. To all of this the embassy agreed, and then Matilda entered Mantua and granted a general pardon. This event took place at the end of October 1114.

Not one historian has commented on the fact that Matilda should have remained inert and apathetic while Henry was surrounding Rome with his myrmidons, forcing the Pope to do his will and insulting and outraging the supreme head of the Church, while on the other hand the news of Mantua's revolt should at once have aroused her to action. The key to this problem is not yet found; we can only wonder whether Paschal's conduct in sacrificing much of the Church's power to the Emperor's tyranny caused a feeling of revulsion in the Church's aged protectress, so that she made no attempt to succour the Pope, but only insisted on the liberation of her vassal bishops. Or did Rome and Pope and Emperor seem too far off to be much heeded now that she was old and ill and weak; while Mantua's uprising awoke at once every early association, carrying her back in spirit to the days when the towns and their inhabitants were absolutely at the disposal of their lords to sack or to exalt as it pleased them? Did the last sparks

from the dying embers of an almost extinct system flame up anew, and the feudal spirit rouse itself for one supreme effort in the dying daughter of one of its greatest potentates, and, for the time being, all that she had inherited from her mighty father, dominate her as in the vigorous days of her youth ?

CHAPTER XXII

Matilda's last donation to San Benedetto, and the grand ceremonial at the abbey—Returns to Bondeno in December, but visits S. Benedetto again at the feast of the Epiphany—Is carried back to Bondeno in great suffering—Visit of the abbot of Cluny—Matilda's last Lent—Her final donations to Canossa's church—She has a chapel built near the rooms where she lies and dedicates it to St. James—Her last words and death—Domnizo's lament—No account given us of her funeral by the ancient writers—Burial at San Benedetto—Changes in the position of the sarcophagus—Finally in 1630 the remains are transferred to Rome.

VERY soon after the capitulation of Mantua, Matilda paid a visit of some days to San Benedetto—'to return thanks to God for this bloodless victory,'[1] and also to visit Abbot Alberico who was alarmingly ill. Such great sympathy did she manifest towards this infirm abbot that she ministered to him with her own hands. And now, with that curious foreboding which comes to those who are shortly to depart from this life, she spoke of her approaching end to all, and especially to her friends of the abbey, and expressed a very strong desire to show in some special manner the love and reverence she felt for these good Benedictines. 'For,' says, Bacchini, 'she saw how all their actions breathed forth sanctity, and in considering the austerity and the mortification of their life, their simplicity, purity and innocence, she seemed to find herself

[1] Bacchini, lib. II. p. 223.

in a company of angels. She had an incredible compunction of heart in leaving them, and wished to bequeath to them an everlasting memorial of the great affection she bore this holy place.'

Therefore she intimated to the monks that on the 8th of November she wished arrangements to be made for a grand ceremonial. Her soldiers were quartered in the village of San Benedetto and in the neighbouring places, and on the great day itself the army was drawn up outside the church, and vast crowds surrounded it from near and far. As many as possible entered the sacred building where the monks were assembled for the customary service. There, too, were all Matilda's most illustrious vassals and soldiers and her whole court in gala array. Matilda, in her princely robes of state, was seated on a throne, especially prepared for her, to the right, before the high altar. In the highest place of honour came that valiant general who had been her life-long friend and companion, Arduino della Palude, and then Conte Alberto, another of her generals. Afterwards there followed in due order her illustrious barons and knights, and the list of these has come down to us as their places were assigned to them : ' Ugone and Alberto, the sons of Manfred, Alard of Malegnano, Gherardo, son of Bosone, Ugo of Baese, Sasso da Bibianello, Rolando Massario, Opizone, Rainerio, Alberto da Gonzaga, Ugo and Lodovico da Governolo, Maragnolo and Pietro di Opizone da Burbasio, and Giovanni da Fudea.' [1]

Standing in front of the altar on the opposite side, were Ubaldo a judge, and Odealdo a man of law. The mass was first celebrated with every solemnity by the priest who held the highest office next in order to the

[1] Bacchini, p. 223.

abbot, for Alberico was still too suffering to officiate in person. The monks chanted the usual psalms, while without, there resounded continually the trumpets and drums of the soldiers. Then the great Countess rose to her feet while Odealdo in a clear ringing voice read aloud the last solemn act of donation of Matilda to the abbey.[1]

'In the name of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, in the year of the incarnation of Our Lord eleven hundred and fourteen. Matilda, if by the Grace of God she is anything. To those venerable places in which those who have rendered themselves poor for love of Christ minister the Divine Mysteries, we ought with right to offer consolation, and by reason of piety to help them in their need. Therefore, we, Matilda, daughter of the defunct Marquis Boniface, having come to San Benedetto with some of our faithful, and having visited the lord Abbot Alberico in his infirmity, we saw this holy congregation of monks; and in considering their mortifications by compunction of piety and love of holy charity, we would wish to make them a donation for their sustenance.' The diploma then goes on to say how the Countess renounced for ever all rights which yet remained to her, in whatever part of the benefices or lands given, or to be given to the monastery, and then specified them. She gave to the monks the rights of pasturage for their flocks in her own possessions, and freed the vassals of San Benedetto from the obligation of helping hunt down the wild beasts in her forests, and this she did, 'pro mercede et remedio animæ nostræ et parentum nostrorum.'

When Odoaldo had finished reading this document, he handed it to the Judge Ubaldo, who bowing reverently before Matilda's throne gave it to Conte Alberto, and he

[1] See Bacchini, lib. II. p. 224 *et seq.* Also Tosti, lib. VI. p. 359 *et seq.*

placed it in his mistress's hands. Matilda, with tears of devotion in her eyes, descended from her throne, and advancing towards the high altar, committed the precious parchment into the hands of the priest who was waiting to receive it. Within the church there arose shouts of jubilation, and without, at the completion of this solemn act, there rang out once more the sound of trumpets and drums.

The whole congregation of the monks of San Benedetto, and all their humble dependents from the neighbouring country, rejoiced together over Matilda's munificence.

Then, after a final visit to the infirm abbot, comforting him by her presence, Matilda returned to Mantua with all her court.

In December she made her way to Bondeno, and hearing that directly after Christmas the Abbot Pontius of Cluny was coming to visit San Benedetto, she returned there once more, and insisted on rising in the night to be present in the church while the monks recited Matins.

The bitter cold, and the fatigue, reduced her strength and brought on acute attacks of pain, and it was with great difficulty that she was conveyed back to Bondeno. Hearing, however, that at the feast of the Epiphany the abbot of Cluny would celebrate the mass, she insisted on being carried back to San Benedetto, and in the arms of her waiting-maids, attended by all her faithful court, she listened to her last service in that great church. Then, still enduring much suffering, she returned to Bondeno, and was never again able to rise from her couch.

Abbot Pontius of Cluny, upon leaving San Benedetto, went over to Bondeno before starting for Burgundy, to bid a last farewell to the Countess. She was

obliged to receive the prelate by her bedside, and expressed much sorrow that she could not rise and do him the usual reverence! After a long talk on spiritual matters, she recommended herself to his prayers, and bestowed on him many gifts, amongst others, some very beautiful silver vessels for his church, and as a small personal token, she gave him with her own hands a precious cross richly encrusted with gems.

The abbot offered her all the spiritual consolation that was in his power, and stayed with her until the end of January. Then he departed homewards, greatly sorrowing that he should never more behold this gracious lady.

In the year 1115 Lent did not begin until the 3rd of March, and the faithful attendants watching round Matilda's bed were rendered very anxious by her express determination to observe rigorously this season of fasting. Finding that the doctor's admonitions were of no avail, her spiritual advisers were appealed to, and they at length persuaded her to desist from fasting, for she grew ever weaker. There were with her at this time the three dear friends who watched over her dying hours to the last—Abbot Alberico, who had recovered from his illness, Manfred, Bishop of Mantua, and Bonsignore, Bishop of Reggio. Owing therefore to their remonstrances, Matilda decided, instead of fasting, that she would feed every day a certain number of poor people, and she started her Lenten exercises with such devotion, with such heart-whole confession and bitter tears of contrition—'that she might well serve as an example to all her court as to how to prepare for death.'[1] When Lent was over she grew steadily worse, and the doctors thought the end could not be far off. She herself was

[1] Bacchini.

well aware of her condition, and bethought her of further deeds of kindness which it was still in her power to perform. She gave instructions that after her death all her serfs should be liberated, and she made two more donations to the churches she loved so well, for she amplified her gifts to San Benedetto, and on Canossa and the church of San Cesareo attached to it she bestowed the rich 'court' of Felina. These two documents were drawn up in the room where she lay dying, and at the foot of the parchment relating to her gift to San Cesareo are these words :—

'Quam Cartam quia Domina Comitissa a propriae manus subscriptione firmare non potuit sigilli sui impressione in signum praecipimus.'

'As the Lady Countess is not able to sign this Charter with her own hand, we place upon it the impression of her seal.'

But again after this there was a rallying of her strength ; it would seem as if her spirit were loth to depart. 'Then,' says Bacchini, 'she took for her protector in those last days, and for the terrible passage across the river, the Apostle St. James, whose feast occurs on the 15th of July.'

She had a premonition that that day would be her last on earth, and she commanded that a chapel should be built close to the room where she lay, and constructed in such a manner that from her bed she might see the high altar, and listen to the sacrifice of the mass. This was done with great haste, and she forthwith endowed the chapel with a sufficient sum for its maintenance and for the vestments of the priests. From her bed she was able to assist at the dedication function, which was performed by the three prelates already mentioned.

As the feast of St. James approached, she grew rapidly worse, but she lingered on for some days, and so, sur-

rounded by her faithful court and her beloved friends, she prepared for the supreme agony. The Viaticum was administered to her by Bonsignore; as she received the Sacrament she prayed: 'My God, Thou knowest how in all the days of my life, I have reposed perfect confidence in Thee, and now that I have reached the end, I pray Thee to save me and receive me into Thy Kingdom.'[1]

As the watchers stood round her bed, the Modenese bishop, seeing her sufferings, held to her lips a crucifix. Kissing this repeatedly, the dying woman exclaimed: 'O Lord Christ! Because I have always loved Thee, I pray Thee now forgive me my sins!'[2] And almost directly afterwards she breathed her last.

So there passed from this life one of the greatest and noblest spirits the world has ever known. Well may Domnizo's lament have resounded throughout the length and breadth of Italy—have echoed the feelings of those 'who loved righteousness and hated iniquity.'

'Now that thou art dead, oh great Matilda, the honour and dignity of Italy will decline!' . . .

'How many cruel tyrants who simulated justice because of thee—knowing thou wert just—will now be unrestrained; will break the treaties of peace: will despoil the churches which will no longer have thee as their defender.'

'By thy death, oh Matilda! all gentle ways will diminish.
For the vassal will try to rise above his lord,
The cleric will depart from the right path,
The rich will devour the money destined to alleviate the sufferings of the poor,
In all the different parts of the world, various sects will arise,
Such as you with your great might forbade, oh Matilda!'[3]

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[1] Dom., *De Insigni Obitu Mathildis*, ll. 109, 110:
'Semper dum vixi, Deus hoc scis, spem tibi fixi;
Nunc in fine meo salvans suscipe quaeso.'

[2] *Ibid.*, l. 107: 'Te colui semper, mea nunc rogo crimina terge.'

[3] *Ibid.*, ll. 24-41.

She had held the reins of government for so long, and all knew that her rule was a just one. Amidst all the strife and dissension that raged through the land during the greater part of her life, she never forgot to think what would be best for her subjects.

During her life, as we have seen, she gave much of her wealth to various abbeys, but only because she deemed that it would be wisely administered, that the cause of the poor would be upheld against the rich, that the hungry would be fed and the naked clothed.

To the Benedictine monasteries she had been especially liberal, since she knew that by their means, art and learning would be preserved. However much the country might be torn in pieces by wars, the monasteries were nearly always respected, and books and treasures therefore, were safe in their keeping. For these things she had cared, and she made provision for them; just as in her lifetime she had never failed to help the oppressed and the needy, she desired after her death to do the same. Looking down the ages since her days, across the mists which surround them, to the clearer light of our own times, may we not say of her as our own poet said of another great and good ruler—a woman also: 'She wrought her people lasting good'?

No account has been handed down to us by the ancient writers, of the funeral ceremonies that took place during those last days of July 1115. In a measure we may picture them for ourselves. How the sad news spread fast throughout her dominions that the great Countess had indeed passed away. How the lords and vassals from all the cities, and from the castles scattered everywhere throughout her states assembled, and how the

VT GENERE ET FORMA AC REGNO PRAEDIVITE.SIC ET
VIRTVTVM MERITIS PIETATISQVE INCLYTA LAVDE
HOC SVA DVM VITAE IMMORTALI RESTITVANTVR
OSSA ADSERVARI VOLVIT MATILDA SEPVLCHRO

TOMB OF MATILDA AT S. BENEDETTO POLIRONE

abbots and monks from many an abbey would follow them, and amongst these last would doubtless be Domnizo, full of sorrow that the remains of his beloved mistress were not to find a resting-place at Canossa—the sorrow that he expresses so eloquently in his poem! Then the humbler portion of her subjects from the neighbouring town of Mantua and the outlying plains, and the serfs she had freed, all these may have formed part of that vast procession that would follow the long road from Bondeno to San Benedetto which the Countess had chosen for her burial-place.

A beautiful simple ark of alabaster upheld by eight slender columns was erected in San Benedetto, and in this the coffin was enclosed, with the following three inscriptions written above the tomb :—

I

Quae meruit clara Mathildis nomina, vide:
Pro qua Pontifici reddita Roma fuit
Et tunc disposuit turmas invicta Virago,
Qualis Amazonides Pentisilea solet.
Qua nunquam saevi per tot discrimina belli
Mars potuit veri vincere iura Dei.
Haec igitur tanto belli defuncta labore
Hoc niveo tandem marmore clausa iacet.

'See what the renowned name of Matilda deserved, through whom Rome was given back to the Pope. And then this warrior-woman disposed her troops as the Amazonian Penthesilea is accustomed to do. Thanks to her—through so many contests of horrid war—man was never able to conquer the rights of God. She therefore, having performed the labours of so much war, now rests enclosed in this marble.'

II

Ut genere, ut forma, ac Regno praediuite, sic et
Virtutem meritis, Pietatisque inclyta laude.

Hoc Sua, dum vitae immortalis restituantur,
Ossa adservari voluit Mathilda Sepulcro.

'Matilda—famous for her race, beauty, and powerful Kingdom as for the merits of virtue, and fame of her piety, wishes that her bones should be preserved here, until they are restored to the life immortal.

III

Stirpe, opibus, forma, gestis, et nomine quondam
Inclyta Mathildis, hic iacet. Astra tenens.

'Matilda, once illustrious by her birth, riches, beauty, deeds, and name, lies here, but lives in heaven.'

Never perhaps have the wishes of the great dead been so little heeded, never have mortal remains been so often disturbed.

Professor Bellodi in his interesting monograph on the Abbey of San Benedetto tells of an old Latin MS.[1] which gives a minute account of the changes in the position of the sarcophagus. It originally stood between the first and second columns on the left, as one enters the church. Then it was moved to the chapel of S. Simeon, and later, when the marble columns threatened to give way, and they were replaced by four lions sculptured in red marble, which now support the sarcophagus, the whole monument was removed to the oratory of the Blessed Virgin, which formed part of the ancient church founded by Tedaldo, Matilda's grandfather. This chapel was always regarded with special veneration, and the good monks, remembering how their great benefactress had loved all beautiful things, sought to embellish it, and employed various artists of note to visit San Benedetto to that end. The walls were adorned with frescoes, and in the pavement round the sarcophagus there was inserted a series of mosaics in which were depicted many symbolic

[1] This may be the MS. published in Muratori's *Rer. It. Script.*, vol. v.
See next page.

figures—symbolical of Matilda and her rare qualities. There they remain until this day—four large female figures, illustrating the Cardinal Virtues which Matilda possessed in so remarkable a degree: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. At the sides are two emblematic figures whose meaning is not so clear to us: on the right a man with a spear in his hand which he aims at a dragon; on the other side a unicorn and a large bird, with webbed feet and almost a dragon's head. These mosaics are worked in red, white, and black stones, and this inscription is still visible :—

ANO—DNI—MILL—C—LI—
IN Dicto XIII L PATTA I CONCUR—
VI—

The monks further commemorated her beneficence by making a general almsgiving in her honour on the first Monday of every month, and after divine service they distributed bread to about four thousand poor persons.

Three times was her tomb opened, and her very remains disturbed. In the year 1445,[1] in the presence of Guido Gonzaga, the reigning Duke of Mantua, who had restored and embellished San Benedetto, of Eusebius the abbot, and the whole congregation of monks, this was done. Again in 1613, when some Pisan and Lucchese soldiers, quartered at the abbey, declared that Matilda did not rest there, but at Pisa beside her mother,[2] and the dispute waxed so

[1] See 'Vita Mathildis ab auctore anonymo,' Muratori, *Rer. It. Script.*, vol. v. p. 397.

[2] Mellini (p. 26) says that in his days (about 1600), there was an inscription on the monument to Beatrice in Pisa to this effect: 'In the year 1116 on the 24th of July died the Lady Countess Matilda of happy memory, who, for the repose of the soul of her mother the venerable Lady Countess Beatrice lying here within this tomb, richly endowed this church in many ways. May their souls rest in peace!' and many thought that this implied that Matilda's remains, as well as her mother's, reposed within the sarcophagus.

hot, and the Mantuans together with the monks of S. Benedetto grew so indignant, that Cardinal Gonzago despatched the Bishop of Casale with power to open the tomb, and prove to the unbelievers that Matilda had in very deed been buried there. This was done, and on both these occasions the spectators testified that the body was there, intact, fair and beautiful.

For the last time, in the year 1630, these poor remains were disturbed in the most violent manner of all. Pope Urban VIII., who had vast ideas as to the embellishment of St. Peter's, and the glorification of some of Italy's noblest dead, determined in his heart that Matilda's body should be conveyed to St. Peter's, and over it there should be reared a superb monument worthy of her name, entirely disregarding the fact that the great Countess had expressed a desire to rest in San Benedetto. Moreover, the Pope's wish was somewhat difficult to realise, since the Mantuans venerated the dead Matilda more than they had respected the living woman. But chance favoured the Pope, for in the year 1630 famine and pestilence visited Mantua, and subsequently the city was sacked by the troops of the Emperor Ferdinand, the whole district overrun by foreign soldiery, and Duke Charles, the reigning lord of Mantua, had to flee to Milara in the Ferrarese country. San Benedetto, reputed the richest abbey in the whole Mantuan country, suffered most from this invasion. Rapacious Austrians, who paid no respect to the abbot and his monks, were quartered there, and demanded not only rations but absurd subsidies. The abbey's resources were taxed to the utmost, and the abbot had to dispose of the church's treasures. In despair he appealed to the Pope, and not in vain. Help and more—preferment—was promised

him, if he would only comply with the Pope's wishes. The abbot was sorely tempted—and yielded.

All arrangements were secretly made, and at dead of night, when they would be absolutely undisturbed, the Abbot Ippolito, his brother Ludovico Andreasi, and an accomplice, Bonifazio Struggio, entered the church, opened the alabaster coffin, and took from it the body of the great Countess. Maffei's account of the sacrilege is piteous :—

'Ma perchè in una cassa non molte grande, la quale havevano fatto fare proportionata al viaggio di Roma per quella che si dice volgarmente carrozza, non capiva il purissimo corpo di Matilda, che fu di non mediocre statura, anzi grande, (cosa che nel dire muove le lacrime) gli ruppero i nodi, e le congiunture delle ginocchia a segno tale, che facilmente a dietro come d'un corpo estinto le piegarono, se pure non furono tagliate come ha divolgata la fama.'[1]

('But because they had prepared only a small wooden coffin to receive it, suitable to the size of the cart upon which it had to travel to Rome, it would not hold that most beautiful body of Matilda, who was of no mediocre stature, but very tall; therefore (a thing which moves us to tears in the telling of it) they broke the neck and the knee-joints so that they could easily push it into the case as if it were a corpse—if they did not even cut the joints, as the report has been spread abroad.')

However, when some time later the abbot's brother was closely interrogated on the matter, he indignantly refuted this story, declaring that Matilda's body suffered no violence whatever—that she had 'fair hair, and the body was beautiful and still supple, as of one only a short time dead, but the lifting it and removing it from its ancient resting-place had injured it much.' ('Ma ch'il levarla di quel loco antico, e l'aperatura del sepolcro assai gli nocque.') The rough coffin was conveyed to Rome and was placed temporarily in the castle of S. Angelo, until

[1] A. Maffei, p. 500.

such time as the monument in St. Peter's should be ready to receive it. In the meantime, at Mantua the theft had been discovered, and a storm of fury arose amongst the citizens. The Austrians had left, and the exiled duke had returned to his own, but rebellion amongst his loyal subjects was threatened, unless Matilda's body was restored to San Benedetto. The duke managed eventually to prove his innocence, and took every means in his power to have the body brought back to Mantua, sending endless letters and messengers to the Vatican imploring the Pope to relinquish his plans. But Urban was inflexible, and the Mantuans had to bow themselves to the supreme will of the head of the Church. The Abbot Ippolito and his brother were forced to flee from S. Benedetto, for fear of the fury of the populace, and the resentment of the duke. They took refuge in Ferrara, and the abbot was shortly afterwards made Bishop of Terni.

The marble sarcophagus was ready and placed in position in the year 1635, but it was not until 1644 that the statue at the head of the monument was completed ; and then, on the night of the 10th March, with great secrecy and haste, Matilda's body was transferred from St. Angelo along the Pope's private passage to St. Peter's, the Cardinals Barberini, Giorio, Poli, and Contelori being present at the translation, and at the placing of the body in a metal casket, which was then deposited within the marble sarcophagus. Thus did Pope Urban gain his ends, and raise Matilda's monument in Rome.

We think that in this record of Matilda, Bernini has given us of his very best. In that calm, majestic figure, with the radiant, uplifted face, something of the grandeur, nobility, and strength that were Matilda's, is manifest.

MONUMENT TO MATILDA IN S. PETER'S

There she stands, close to the tomb of the Apostle whose daughter she loved to call herself, and there we may leave her resting in peace at last, not, however, without many thoughts of reverence and admiration for a life most nobly lived amidst tribulations and tumults such as we of the modern world can but dimly apprehend.

Farewell, therefore, faithful daughter of Peter!

You upheld in the world a very noble ideal, and your life was not lived in vain. Many generations have passed you by unheeding, but the future will not be so forgetful. The memory of you will reawaken, and strike a chord of gratitude in the hearts of the people of Italy; and the stranger from afar will listen to its echo, and will look with fresh love and reverence upon the semblance of the woman, who was once 'the wonder of Italy.'

APPENDIX A

Note to p. 143.

In Calmet's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Lorraine* there is told the following legend of the great Countess:—

'Some Benedictine monks from Calabria had arrived in the valley of Orval, and had established themselves there with the permission of Count Arnold about the year 1000. Some few years later (*sic*) the Countess Matilda, widow of Godfrey the Hunchback, having come from Italy to see Count Arnold, her relation, the latter begged her one day to pay a visit to his monks, who had only settled a short while before in his lands. Matilda went with the Count, visited their abode, and conversed with them on pious subjects. Being seated on the edge of their fountain, which is very beautiful, she dipped her hands several times into the water. Her ring fell off her finger, and disappeared beneath the water, and, in spite of most diligent searchings, it was not to be found. Then she made a solemn vow to God that if He would give her back her ring, she would undertake to have this place consecrated for ever to His service by a number of monks, whom she herself would endow. At that moment her ring reappeared on the water, and so she hastened to fulfil her vow. It was through the liberality of the Duchess Matilda and Count Arnold, that the monks were enabled to erect their church and monastery.'

APPENDIX B

Beatrix Comitissa Ducissa Tusciae, cum filia sua Mathilde, refutationem quarumdam terrarum facit Monasterio Veronensi Sancti Zenonis, Anno 1073.[1]

In nomine Sanctae et individuae Trinitatis. Ego Beatrix

[1] Muratori, *Ant. It. Med. Æv.*, vol. i. p. 591.

Comitissa, & gloriosa filia mea Mathildis, omnibus fidelibus Christi notum esse volumus, quod ego Beatrix Comitissa cum preclara filia mea Mathilde, amore Dei, & sanctissimi Confessoris Christi Zenonis instinctae, per lignum, quod in nostris tenebamus manibus, in presentia Fratrum Monasterii, ipsius Sancti Zenonis, & aliorum bonorum hominum, quorum nomina subtus leguntur, refutavimus in manu Domini Werinheri Abbatis illas res ipsius Monasterii, quas nos habere visae sumus, idest Vouferrario, & Vouipigozzo, & Runco Cavelo, & Fatuledo, cum omni jure & reditu & districtu, & porcis & multonibus; & res illas Monasterii in loco, qui dicitur Barche, sito in confinio Trebunciolo, & Runco Hostilienses, cum omni jure & reditu pro remedio animae nostrae, seu Gotefridi Ducis & Bonifacii Marchionis, vel ceterorum parentum nostrorum; ea videlicet ratione, ut Monachi ibidem Domino servientes illa bona ad victum suum omni tempore habeant pro sempiterna nostrarum animarum recordatione. Et Abbas, qui modò est, vel sui successores, non habeant licentiam alicui personae per Libellum, aut in Beneficium dare. Si autem iste Abbas, vel aliquis suus successor illa bona, quae supra leguntur, per aliquod ingenium abstraxerit à victu Fratrum, aut alicui per Libellum, aut in Beneficium dederit, ad manus nostras, aut nostrorum heredum reverti debeant; insuper centum Libras Denariorum Veronensium nobis debeat componere. Actum est hoc in Monasterio Sancti Zenonis in Refectorio Fratrum, Anno ab Incarnatione Domini MLXXIII. Indictione XI. in die Sabbati, quod est quarta Idus Augusti, in Festivitate Sancti Laurentii Martyris Christi feliciter. Et ut hoc à nobis factum esse credatur, Sigilli nostri impressione confirmatum manifestetur.

(Beatrice, Countess and Duchess of Tuscany, together with her daughter Matilda, makes a donation of some lands to the Veronese Monastery of San Zeno, in the year 1073.

In the name of the Holy and indivisible Trinity. I Beatrice Countess, and my glorious daughter Matilda, wish to make known to all the faithful in Christ, that I Beatrice, Countess, together with my celebrated daughter Matilda, constrained by the love of God, and of that most holy Confessor of Christ, Zeno, by the wood that we hold in our hands, in the presence of the brothers of the monastery of the aforementioned Zeno, and in the presence

of other good men whose names are to be read below, do put in the hands of the Lord Irnerius, Abbot of the said Monastery, the things which we have, that is to say Vouferrain and Voupigozzo, and Ronco Cavelo and Fatuledo, with all rights over them, and revenues from the same, together with those lands of the Monastery in the place which is called Barche, situated on the borders of Trebunciolo and Ronco Hostiliensis with all rights over them and rents from the same, for our own souls, for the souls of Godfrey, Duke, and Boniface Marquis, and of all our relations, under these conditions that the monks, serving the Lord, always can have these lands for ever, for their sustenance, as an eternal record of our souls.

And neither the Abbot nor his successors shall have any right to lease them or give them in fief to any person whatsoever.

Therefore if the said Abbot or his successor should give the aforementioned lands in rent or in fief to any person whomsoever, or prevent them yielding their sustenance for the good of the brethren for any reason whatsoever, the said lands are to revert to us or to our heirs, and the Abbot or his successor will pay to us a fine of 100 lbs. of Veronese money.

This Deed is drawn up in the Monastery of Saint Zeno, in the refectory of the brethren in the year of the Incarnation 1073 XI. Indiction, on Saturday that is the 10th of August on the feast of Saint Laurence blessed martyr for Christ, and in order that it may be credited that we have made this deed, we place upon it the impression of our seal.)

APPENDIX C

The identification of the chapel of St. Nicholas,[1] mentioned by Domnizo, with the one at the castle of Montezane, would

[1] The present writer is indebted to Professor Naborre Campanini's admirable little book on Canossa for the arguments in favour of the Montezane Chapel, and for the distinction between the three days of counsel and the three days' penance. Professor Campanini has held the post of Royal Inspector of National Monuments in the Reggian district, and has devoted many years to the study of Canossa.

Sigillum cereum .

SEAL OF BEATRICE, AND CROSSES ON THE DOCUMENT QUOTED ON P. 283

considerably lessen the difficulties which confront us, in piecing together the Canossa narrative as set forth in Gregory's letter to the German princes, and in Lambert of Hersfeld and Domnizo's chronicles, these being the most important contemporary writers who have given us an account of what occurred there. Many who have asserted that those contradict each other seem moved by a spirit of antagonism to criticise too severely the actual letter of the text, without regard to the atmosphere of the times in which it was written, or to the limited means of expression at the command of the chronicler,[1] and certainly many a critic has written with little or no knowledge of the topography of Canossa. To quote one small instance. Formerly Lambert of Hersfeld was accused of having invented the triple circle of walls round Canossa, because no other chronicler had mentioned them. The excavations have proved that Lambert was quite correct. Many Aemilian castles were similarly defended, and it did not strike an Italian as anything worth recording, whereas it was unusual in the eyes of the foreign visitors, from whose descriptions Lambert doubtless chronicled the fact.

To return to the chapel of St. Nicholas: it is only in Domnizo's account that it is mentioned, and although there are quantities of documents extant concerning Canossa and its church of St. Apollonio, there is no allusion anywhere to a chapel dedicated to S. Nicholas, nor have the excavations at Canossa revealed traces of such a chapel. It is true that this cannot be accepted as absolute proof of the non-existence of such a building, since so much of Canossa and its fabric has completely disappeared. On the other hand, there is strong evidence in favour of the Montezane Chapel. This was a building of some note in the Middle Ages, and is often alluded to in documents as 'Cappella Sancti Nicholai de Montezane,' or 'de Canuscia,' or as 'Ecclesia ruralis Sancti Nicholai de Canossa in Castro Montis Zani,' attached therefore to the mother-church at Canossa. Now Domnizo may have taken for granted that his

[1] Domnizo, for instance, invokes both S. Peter and S. Paul to help him with his verses, and we seem to hear his sigh of relief in the concluding words of the poem:

'Thanks be to the Lord, O friends! that we have finished this book.'

readers would know the situation of this chapel,[1] for in writing of the days after Matilda and her guests had arrived at Canossa, and it had become a 'second Rome,' he goes on to say: 'These Lords held councils of peace, and for three days remained discussing it, but there was no peace, and the King therefore wished to depart, but he himself went to the chapel of St. Nicholas,' and then follows the description of an interview with Matilda and Hugo of Cluny, and no reference to the locality of the chapel. Most historians have assumed that it was within the walls of Canossa because they have thought that Domnizo's three days of counsel meant the three days of penance. So far as we know, Stephens is the only historical writer who has separated these three days, and has made it clear that the interview in the chapel was prior to the penance.[2] In the present account it has been assumed that Henry was staying at Bianello during the three days' negotiations, because when later, after the penance at Canossa, he asked for another interview with Gregory, and this was arranged to be held at Bianello, Domnizo writes: 'And the sixth day the King returned to Bianello.'[3]

Of late years there have been several attempts to belittle the Canossa incident—to deny *in toto* the fact of the three days' penance. One German critic[4] in particular has been at great pains to prove that the whole story is a fabrication of Lambert's, and that the King's penance consisted only in appearing before the Pope in the woollen shirt, and with bare feet, not in waiting thus attired for three days without the citadel. In support of this view, he argues that Gregory's letter to the German princes has been misinterpreted, and that in the sentence: 'Ibique per triduum ante portam castri, deposito omni regio cultu, miserabiliter, utpote discalciatus et laneis indutus, persistens,' etc.,—the 'persistens' refers to 'ante portam castri' alone, and not to the other words immediately preceding it, that in fact the King waited outside the gate of the castle for three days, and *afterwards*,

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. i.

[2] *Hildebrand and his Times.*

[3] Dom., lib. II. cap. i.

[4] Professor Holder-Egger in the *Neues Archiv für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* (vol. xix. 1894).

when the Pope said he would receive him, removed every royal ornament and clothed himself in wool.

Two additional arguments adduced in this criticism on Lambert against the usual version of three days in ice and snow, are that Domnizo does not mention them, but writes only of three days' counsel, and that in the picture illustrating Henry's interview with Matilda and Hugo of Cluny, the King is represented, not in penitential attire, but in kingly vestments, and with a small crown on his head, and the writer concludes his strictures on this part of Lambert's account by declaring emphatically that 'the whole story of the three days' penance ought to be erased from the history books.' We cannot agree with this view, nor are these arguments convincing. It seems too unlikely to be true that Gregory's letter should have been misread and misinterpreted on such an all-important point, and while it is a fact that Domnizo does not precisely state that the King did three days' penance, there are so many things Domnizo omits to say that in this case above any the *argumentum ab silentio* is very inconclusive. For instance, he makes not the slightest allusion to Beatrice's second husband, and if we had only his chronicle as an authority, we should certainly conclude she had not married again after Boniface's death. But in the case of Canossa we think that the critic has overlooked a subsequent allusion to Henry's visit there, which certainly seems to imply the generally accepted story. In writing of the time when Henry was meditating an attack on Canossa in 1092 Domnizo says: 'Remembering the evil things he had suffered at Canossa, when he stood there with bare feet, benumbed by the cold and the snow, he thought the hour had come for vengeance.'

This certainly seems to mean more than the cold he would have suffered in appearing with bare feet before the Pope.

We cannot tell why Domnizo evades direct mention of the three days' penance, but if these succeeded the three days' negotiations at Bianello, as we believe, then what he says further as to the date of the Pope's relenting may be accepted literally as it stands. 'Seven days before January ended, the Pope agreed that the King should appear before him'[1]—not that he

[1] Dom., lib. II. cap. i.

actually received the King seven days before January ended, but that he yielded, as it were, to entreaties, and said that he would see the King. Therefore, if on that 25th day of January word had been brought the King that eventually the Pope would receive him, and if the penance were begun on the 25th and lasted three days, and on the fourth day, as Lambert says, he were introduced into the presence of the Pope, then the two accounts of Domnizo and Lambert coincide in this respect, inasmuch as the document of the King's promises to the Pope signed at Canossa on the 28th of January is still preserved.

We are loth ourselves to take the picture as evidence one way or another, for surely it is very generally admitted that these early illustrations are only symbolic renderings of ideas, and cannot be regarded as realistic representations of events—a king had to wear a crown to show he was a king. (We wonder, by the way, if the German critic supposes that Hugo brought his abbatial staff to the conference, as depicted in this picture?) But if this meeting of Henry, Matilda, and Hugo occurred the day before the penance began, it would not have been necessary to portray Henry in his penitential attire, even if an artist could have been found willing to paint a monarch without a crown.

No one, of course, believes that Henry literally stood still at the gates from morning till evening on those three bitter days, as Lambert's critic seems to think has been credited, when he says seriously: 'This would be contrary to all laws of nature.' Surely it is less impossible to suppose that he stood and knocked at the gates at intervals, moving up and down the steep path from time to time, than that he and his 'numerous followers' were only sheltered by tents during the wintry nights, which supposition we are invited to accept. Even the hardy Aemilian peasant of to-day would be appalled at such a prospect, inured as he is to the rigorous winters of the Reggian Apennines.

It would be beyond the scope of the present work to enter into all the strictures on Lambert of Hersfeld, but if we disentangle the three days' negotiations at Bianello from the three days' penance at Canossa, and assume that the chapel at Montezane was the place of the celebrated interview, as illus-

trated in Domnizo's manuscript, it will be found in these respects Lambert's account does not essentially contradict those of other contemporary authorities.

One further point of contention remains to be noticed as regards Lambert's narrative. Of late years the story of the occurrence in the church at Canossa, when Henry received absolution, has been discredited by many historians.[1] The Italian writers of the period (Domnizo and Bonitho amongst others) say that Henry did communicate, Bonitho adding that the Pope solemnly warned the King that his fate would be even as that of the traitor Judas if he partook unworthily.

On the other hand, the German chronicler, Berthold of Constance, who died in 1088, and who is one of the earliest writers on this period, corroborates in a measure Lambert's account, inasmuch as he says that when the Pope offered the sacrament to the King he refused it, professing himself unworthy to receive it, and the Pope 'enlightened by the Holy Ghost' regarded this as a sign of the insincerity of the King's repentance, and was forthwith put on his guard.

So reliable and unbiassed an historian as Giesebrecht, while acknowledging the difficulty of arriving at any accurate conclusion in view of these conflicting testimonies, and while himself inclined to reject Lambert's account, adds, however, that directly after the Canossa incident many stories of the King's refusal of the Host were circulated in Germany. Modern writers who believe that Henry did communicate, declare that they do so on the grounds that the acceptance of the Host by the penitent, formed an integral part of the absolution ceremony, that it was in fact necessary for the penitent to communicate in order once more to be received into the body of the Church. From all the accounts we have read, we think that this statement is open to question; both Berthold and Lambert speak of the Pope's presenting the Host to the King after absolution had been pronounced. Berthold says after the Pope had given 'the kiss of peace'—as if these chroniclers took it for granted that the acceptance of the Host on the King's part was optional,

[1] See Giesebrecht, vol. iii., pp. 400 and 1038; Overman, p. 141.

and that their readers would understand this. We cannot feel ourselves that the whole story is incredible. If we take into consideration all the circumstances of the case and Henry's treacherous character, it seems probable that Lambert was not very wide of the mark in what he has written with regard to this incident, and we have therefore followed his version in the text.

APPENDIX D

THE TEXT OF GREGORY'S LETTER TO THE GERMAN PRINCES FROM CANOSSA

Gregorius [1] episcopus servus servorum Dei omnibus archiepiscopis episcopis ducibus comitibus caeterisque principibus regni Teutonicorum christianam fidem defendentibus salutem et apostolicam benedictionem.

Quoniam pro amore iustitiae communem nobiscum in agone christianae militiae causam et periculum suscepistis; qualiter rex, humiliatus ad poenitentiam absolutionis veniam impetraverit, et quomodo tota causa post introitum eius in Italiam huc usque deducta sit, vestrae dilectioni sincera caritate indicare curavimus.

Sicut constitutum fuit cum legatis, qui ad nos de vestris partibus missi sunt, in Longobardiam venimus circiter viginti dies ante terminum, in quo aliquis ducum ad clusas nobis occurrere debuit; expectantes adventum illorum, quatenus ad partes illas transire possemus. Verum cum, iam decurso termino, hoc nobis nunciaretur: his temporibus prae multis—quod et nos quidem credimus—difficultatibus ducatum nobis obviam mitti non posse; nec aliunde copiam ad vos transeundi haberemus; non parva sollicitudine, quid potissimum nobis agendum foret, circumventi sumus.

Interim vero, regem adventare, certe cognovimus, Qui etiam, priusquam intrasset Italiam, supplices ad nos legatos praemittens, per omnia se satisfacturum Deo et sancto Petro ac nobis, obtulit; et, ad emendationem vitae suae omnem se servaturum oboedien-

[1] *Reg.*, iv. 12, p 256 *et seq.*

tiam, repromisit; dummodo apud nos absolutionis et apostolicae benedictionis gratiam impetrare mereretur. Quod cum diu multis consultationibus differentes, acriter eum de suis excessibus per omnes qui intercurrebant nuncios redargueremus; tandem per semet ipsum, nichil hostile aut temerarium ostentans, ad oppidum Canusii, in quo morati sumus, cum paucis advenit.

Ibique per triduum ante portam castri, deposito omne regio cultu, miserabiliter, utpote discalciatus et laneis indutus, persistens, non prius cum multo fletu apostolicae miserationis auxilium et consolationem implorare destitit, quam omnes, qui ibi aderant et ad quos rumor ille pervenit, ad tentam pietatem et compassionis misericordiam movit: ut, pro eo multis precibus et lacrimis intercedentes, omnes quidem insolitam nostrae mentis duritiam mirarentur, nonnulli vero, in nobis non apostolicae severitatis gravitatem sed quasi tyrannicae feritatis crudelitatem esse clamarent.

Denique instantia compunctionis eius et tanta omnium qui ibi aderant supplicatione devicti, tandem eum, relaxato anathematis vinculo, in communionis gratiam et sinum sanctae matris ecclesiae recepimus, acceptis ab eo securitatibus quae inferius scriptae sunt. Quarum etiam confirmationem per manus abbatis Clunaciensis et filiarum nostrum Mathildis et comitissae Adelaiae et aliorum principum episcoporum et laicorum, qui nobis ad hoc utiles visi sunt, recepimus. His itaque sic peractis, ut ad pacem ecclesia et concordiam regni, sicut diu desideravimus, omnia plenius Deo adiuvante cooptare possimus, ad partes vestras data primum opportunitate transire cupimus. Hoc enim dilectionem vestram indubitanter scire volumus, quoniam, sicut in descriptis securitatibus cognoscere potestis, ita adhuc totius negocii causa suspensa est, ut et adventus noster et consiliorum vestrorum unanimitas permaxime necessaria esse videantur. Qua propter in ea fide quam coeptis et amori iustitiae omnes permanere studete; scientes: nos non aliter regi obligatos, nisi quod puro sermone—sicut michi mos est—in his eum de nobis sperare dixerimus, in quibus eum ad salutem et honorem suum, aut cum iustitia aut cum misericordia, sine nostrae et illius animae periculo adiuvare possimus.

APPENDIX E

'THE OATH OF HENRY KING OF THE TEUTONS'

(*Canossa, 28th January* 1077).

Iusiurandum Henrici regis Teutonicorum.[1]

'Ego Henricus rex de murmuratione et dissensione, quam nunc habent contra me archiepiscopi et episcopi, duces comites ceterique principes regni Teutonicorum et alii qui eos in eadem dissensionis causa sequuntur, infra terminum, quem dominus papa Gregorius constituerit, aut iustitiam secundum iudicium eius aut concordiam secundum consilium eius faciam; nisi certum impedimentum mihi vel sibi obstiterit; quo transacto ad peragendum idem paratus ero. Item, se idem domnus papa Gregorius ultra montes seu ad alias partes terrarum ire voluerit, securus erit ex mei parte et eorum quos constringere potero, ab omni laesione vitae et membrorum eius seu captione—tam ipse quamqui in eius conductu et comitatu fuerint seu qui ab illo mittuntur vel ad eum de quibuscumque terrarum partibus venerint—in eundo et ibi morando seu inde redeundo. Neque aliud aliquod impedimentum habebit ex meo consensu, quod contra honorem suum sit; et si quis ei fecerit cum bona fide secundum posse meum adjuvabo.'

Actum Canusiae 5 Kalendas Februarii indictione 15. anno domini nostri Iesu Christi 1077, presentibus episcopis: Umberto Praenestino Giraldo Ostiensi; cardinalibus Romanis: Petro tituli S. Chrisogoni et Conone tituli S. Anastasie; Romanis diaconibus Gregorio et Bernardo; subdiacono Umberto. Item ex parte regis interfuerunt: Bremensis archiepiscopus, et episcopi Vercellensis et Osnaburgensis et abbas Cluniacensis et multi nobiles viri.

[1] *Reg.*, iv. 12 *a*.

APPENDIX F

THE TEXT OF MATILDA'S LETTER TO POPE PASCHAL (FROM MIGNE'S 'PATROLOGIA,' vol. 163, col. 458)

Mathildis marcisae ad Paschalem papam

(*Ante annum* 1106).

Sanctismo et venerabili in Christo Patri ac domino Paschali, primae sedis antistiti, Mathildis marcisae Dei gratia, si quid est, tam debitum quam fidele totius subjectionis obsequium.

Inter alia ex quibus paternitatem vestram rogare praesumimus, de Patris ac domini nostri Anselmi Cantuariensis venerabilis archiepiscopi expulsione clementiam vestram singulariter postulamus, quatenus juxta debitum vestrae sedis judicium, tam sancti ac reverendi Patris tribulationes et miserias quas pro fide catholica et sancta Romana ecclesia tolerat, tanquam pius Pater et dominus fideliter attendatis ejusque lacrymabilem querimoniam condoleatis atque sanctis negotiis manum consilii et auxilii clementius porrigatis. Indecens enim est tam praecipuum sanctae Ecclesiae Romanae membrum tanto tempore exsulatum jacere inter alia quasi putridum, et non agere sibi commissum incunctanter officium. Dolemus igitur corpori Ecclesiae ex maxima parte illius ministerium esse subtractum, cujus gubernaculum scimus esse sibi per omnia et pro omnibus necessarium. Unde flexis genibus de eo vestram clementiam postulamus, cujus singularem post Dominum fiduciam vos esse procul dubio credimus, quam nostris etiam meritis circa eum augeri non minimi desideramus.

APPENDIX G

NOTE ON MATILDA'S DONATION

Domnizo refers to Matilda's donation to the Roman Church in 1077 as follows:—[1]

> 'Propria clavigero sua subdidit omnia Petro;
> Ianitor est coeli suus heres, ipsaque Petri.'

('She placed all her goods under the care of Peter the keeper of the keys, and thus he who opens the gates of heaven became her heir and she the handmaiden of Peter.')

The only other mention of this donation in contemporary history, Gregorovius [2] tells us, we find in a cursory paragraph in Pietrus Diaconus,[3] who says that in 1077 the Countess Matilda, fearing the power of the Emperor, gave the provinces of Liguria (as Lombardy was often called) and Tuscany, to Pope Gregory and the Holy Roman Church.

The original document does not exist, but in the crypt of St. Peter's there is the fragment of a large stone tablet on which the words of the parchment of 1102 are supposed to have been inscribed. This fragment has been restored—and it is believed by many to have served as the original for all the manuscript copies that are to be found.

Here is the substance of it:—[4]

'In the name of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity. In the year of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ 1102 the 15th day of the Kalends of December the Xth indiction. In the time of the Lord Pope Gregory VII., in the Chapel of Santa Croce at

[1] Dom. lib. II. cap. i.

[2] Greg., vol. iv. part II. p. 361.

[3] 'Anno Dominicae Incarnationis millesimo septuagesimo septimo, Mathilda Comitissa Liguriae et Tusciae iram Imperatoris Henrici sibi infesti metuens, Liguriam et Tusciam Provincias Gregorio Papae et Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae devotissimè obtulit.'—From *Chron. S. Monast. Casinensis.* Leo Ostensis, etc. Murat., *Ant. It.*, vol iv. p. 464.

[4] This taken partly from the Biographical Dictionary of Larousse and partly from Pannenborg, pp. 40, 41.

the Lateran Palace, in the presence of Cencius Frangipani, Gratianus Cencius Franculini, and Alberico of Pierleone, and Benincasa his brother, and Hubert of Tascia, and many others, I Matilda, Countess by the grace of God, gave to the Church of S. Peter, for the repose of my soul and that of my parents (the Lord Pope Gregory accepting it) all my goods present and to come, on this side and on that of the mountains, and I ordered a Charter of this to be made. But as this Charter is not to be found, fearing that my donation may be revoked as doubtful, I renew it to-day in the hands of Bernard, cardinal legate, with the customary ceremonies in such case, and I strip myself of all my goods for the profit of the Pope and the Roman Church, without myself or my heirs ever being able to contest this, under penalty of 1000 lbs. of gold and 4000 lbs. of silver. . . .

Given at Canossa. . . .

From the time of Matilda's death onwards for many generations there was no end to the disputes concerning the exact meaning of this donation. Gregorovius calls it 'one of the most fatal bequests known to history . . . the apple of discord of the time, thrown by a woman between the Popes and Emperors.' Many think that the words 'omnia bona mea' (all my goods), as they exist on the stone, could only refer to her personal wealth, and those territories called allodial lands which she had inherited directly from her father and mother, while those lands she held as fiefs from the Empire returned to the Emperor at her death. In 1116 the Emperor came down to Italy and peacefully took possession of Canossa, and Domnizo himself welcomes him in a song as Canossa's lord! Yet one would think that this would certainly have been held as personal property.

Bacchini, in an unpublished MS. in the Gonzaga archives at Mantua, describes the confusion and disorder which prevailed, and says that many Italian lords invited the Emperor to come down to Italy and settle the question, and says further that 'in spite of the rightful claims of the Roman Church, the Emperor seized several of Matilda's cities and gave parts of Tuscany and Liguria as fiefs to various nobles.'

And in 1116, when in Italy, the Emperor made a donation of

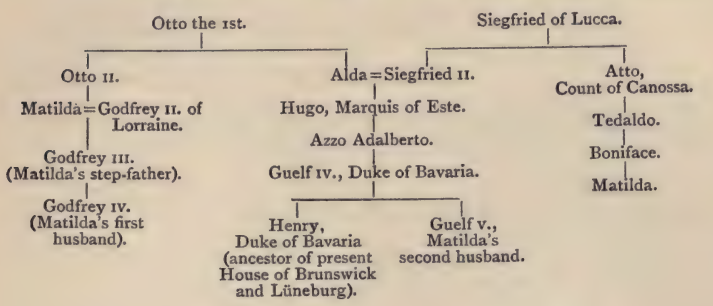
a large wood named Solamine[1] to the monastery of Gonzaga, together with other lands, and declared that he gave them for 'the peace of his own soul and for the soul of Countess Matilda,' which seems to show he had inherited them from her.

The confusion was indeed very great, and the Roman Church appeared to be too weak just then to support fully its claims, while the family of Este, as Matilda's nearest relatives, put in a claim for her property, so that the disorder increased. Many of the towns grew in importance during this period, and took the opportunity of freeing themselves from their allegiance to any of the three claimants, thus instituting for themselves the 'communes' which had already existed in reality, although not in name, since, as we have seen in Matilda's lifetime, many of them obtained from her a liberal form of government, and the right to rule themselves,—a thing unparalleled in past history.

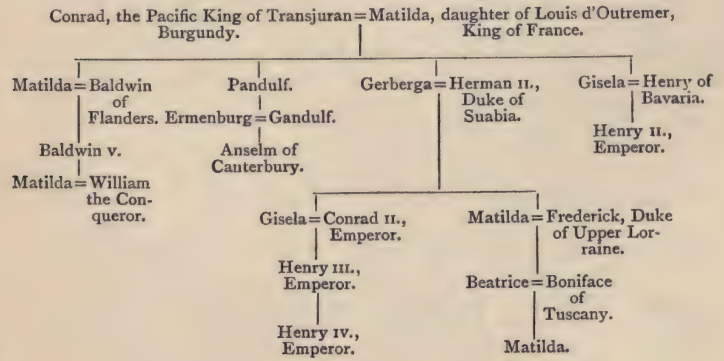
[1] Bacchini.

APPENDIX H

Tree showing the connection of Matilda with her two husbands.



Tree showing Matilda's connection with the German Emperors, and with Anselm of Canterbury.[1]


Conrad, the Pacific King of Transjuran Burgundy.
Matilda, daughter of Louis d'Outremer, King of France.
Matilda = Baldwin of Flanders.
Pandulf.
Gerberga = Herman II., Duke of Suabia.
Gisela = Henry of Bavaria.
Ermenburg = Gandulf.
Henry II., Emperor.
Baldwin V.
Anselm of Canterbury.
Matilda = William the Conqueror.
Gisela = Conrad II., Emperor.
Matilda = Frederick, Duke of Upper Lorraine.
Henry III., Emperor.
Beatrice = Boniface of Tuscany.
Henry IV., Emperor.
Matilda.

[2] See *Life and Times of St. Anselm*, Martin Rule.

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